

Creative Learning Series

Play Activities for Child Development

A guide to preschool teachers



Mina Swaminathan and Prema Daniel



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This book has grown out of the manual *Play Activities for Young Children* originally developed by the first author in 1983 and published by UNICEF in 1984. The manual was part of UNICEF's support for improving the quality of the preschool education component in ICDS, which, already about ten years old and massive in reach, was even then seen to be less than adequate in quality. Its dissemination was very wide: the first edition of 1,50,000 reaching anganwadi workers in the Hindi-speaking and -knowing areas of the study, and 7000 copies being used by trainers and supervisors. Later on, other Indian language editions (Tamil, Malayalam, and Oriya), of several thousands each, were prepared in various States, again with the support of UNICEF. The manual, which is now out of print, has thus been widely distributed and used, and the feedback from the field, mostly of an anecdotal kind, has been very positive. At any rate, the first author has found, in the course of her travels, that she is easily recognized as a friend, guide, and mentor, and warmly welcomed by anganwadi workers everywhere in India. And, from the early 1990s, UNICEF has been asking for a revised and improved version (though it has taken another decade to bring that intention to fulfillment).

Since the manual was for free distribution directly by Government, it could not be made available to teachers and institutions in other sectors, nor could it be made freely obtainable as a priced publication on the open market. However, many workers in ECE in the non-governmental sector (that is, those teaching in private schools and in balwadis run by NGOs) who have seen it, have been highly appreciative and enthusiastic about using it.

This is what gave us the idea of jointly developing a revised, enriched, and more systematic version of the original, and of trying to make it widely available as a priced publication, preferably low-cost, available on the open market to all teachers who are interested in learning more and improving their skills. With this in mind, we started work in 1998 and completed the first draft of the manuscript in its present form, with much encouragement from professional friends and well-wishers. But ironically, while professionals appreciate the pressing need for such a manual, the need does not seem to translate into market demand. It seems

that the majority of private schools in India are not interested in play-based or developmentally-appropriate curriculum for young children, and prefer other approaches that we can only say we abhor as being contradictory to known principles of pedagogy and child development. This is because ECE in India, having been totally unrecognized till very recently, has been quite unregulated - there are no broadly accepted or laid-down guidelines, standards, or norms regarding what should be taught and, even more importantly, how it should be taught. The very few who are interested and supportive are obviously not enough to constitute a market, in terms that make sense to publishers. Hence, though the first draft of the present book was ready by early 1999, we spent more than three years trying to get leading educational publishers (in English) interested. Our efforts, ranging from outright rejection to varying levels of negotiation, ended in failure, but we also discovered that, had we succeeded, the price of the book would have made it prohibitive for those we were most interested in reaching. So we are immensely grateful to the National Book Trust for having the vision and daring to bring out a book that meets "needs" that do not generate "demand". Even more so, because we know that, in due course, many Indian language editions will be published and find their way to those who are interested and need them, if they learn to make themselves heard.

The basic concept underlying this manual, which is addressed directly to the classroom teacher or childcare worker, is that of "developmental appropriateness." We have used the same idea in the *Activity-based Developmentally-appropriate Curriculum for Young Children*, also our joint venture, published by the Indian Association for Preschool Education, Chennai. Hence, we have chosen to go about it by briefly delineating the various domains of development and then presenting a set of activities that could help foster the child's development of concepts, skills, attitudes, and behaviours in those domains. This forms the core of the manual, which then goes on to deal with some of the organisational issues that teachers have to be concerned with. The plan of the book is reader-friendly: each major section deals with one domain of development, starting with a short theoretical introduction and followed by a set of activities. This makes it possible for the teacher to go straight to the activity of choice, making use of the theory as

and when required. The activities themselves are laid out in a uniform format, making it easy for the teacher, once familiar with the approach, not only to quickly find what is needed, but also to understand it easily. The language is simple and direct, and the examples are chosen to stimulate the teacher to think of more activities; while the appendix contains carefully illustrated instructions for making teaching-learning aids, toys, and play materials. There is no special order in which the various domains -or the activities - have to be taken up, and the book can be dipped into and used flexibly. In fact, it is meant to be used like a resource and reference book, and not like a textbook to be read from one end to the other in a prescribed order. Hopefully, this would make it the classroom teacher's friend and companion. And, if it does, that would be our best reward.

Working together on this book, with all its ups and downs, has been a most enjoyable and rewarding experience for both of us. One of our pleasant tasks is to express our deep debt of gratitude to all those who have encouraged, helped, and supported us in various ways:

- UNICEF, for bringing out the earlier version of this book in 1984
- Bernard van Leer Foundation, for encouraging us to revise the book through a small seeding grant in 1998, as part of the project Operation Resource Support
- Mini Krishnan, friend, guide and adviser, for timely advice, moral support, optimism, and faith in us even when things seemed at their most bleak
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- Mallika Badrinath, our designer, for her creativity and perseverance in enriching the text with both meaning and visual delight

- Our editors at NBT, Dr. Baldev Singh 'Baddan,' Chief Editor and Joint Director and Dr. Srirang K. Jha, Series in-charge, for the care, concern, and skill with which this book has been handled, and
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Without each one of them, this book would never have been possible.

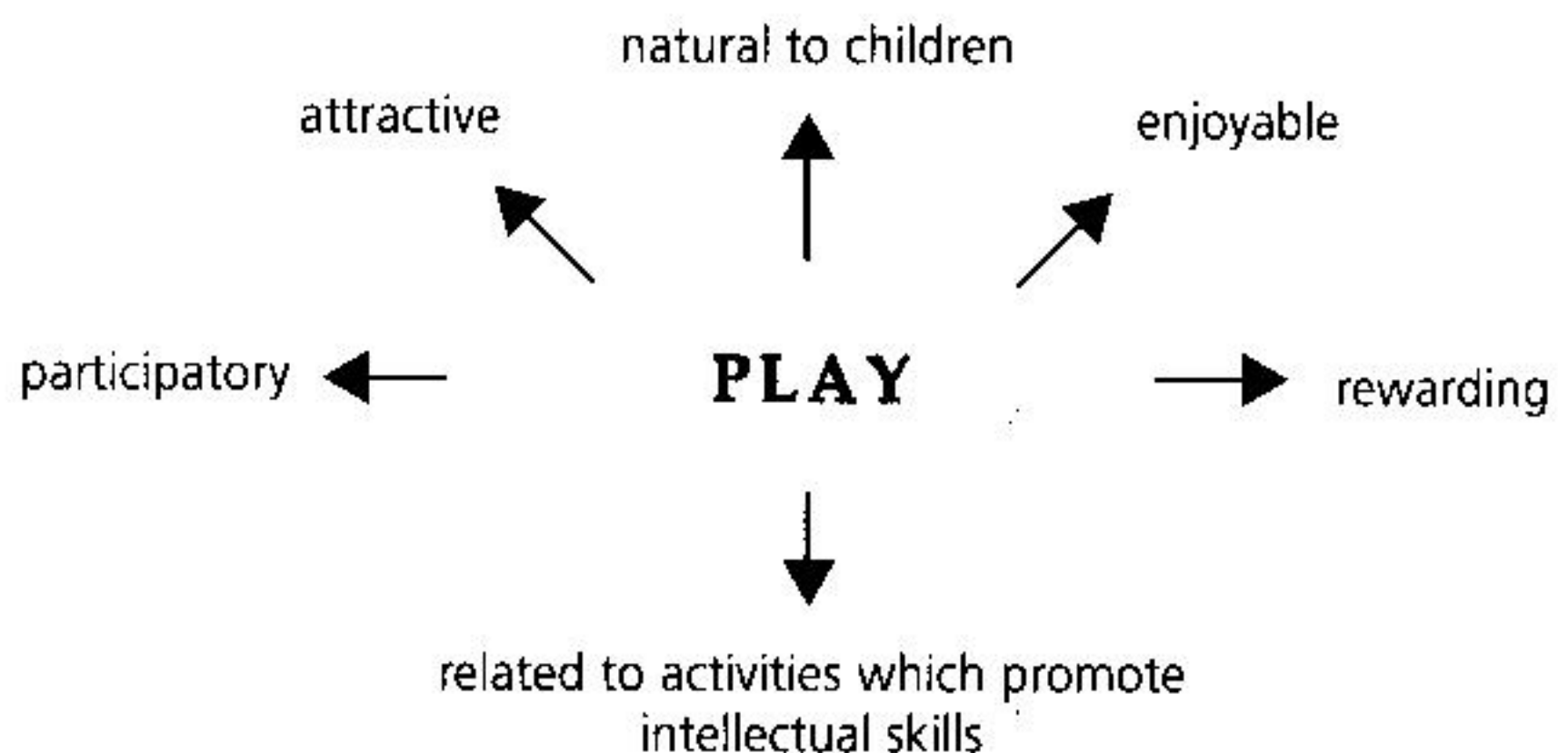
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Chennai

PREMA DANIEL
October 2003

This book is based on the belief, supported by numerous studies in the last hundred years, that play is the medium by which children learn. So teachers / workers / caregivers in Early Childhood Education (ECE) Programmes must be familiar with play activities and its various dimensions, in order to reach / teach children.

What is play?

We have all observed children at play, yet it is difficult to define play. A four month old infant kicking his/her legs or throwing up his/her arms, looking at a dancing doll and squealing with joy is quite a familiar sight. A baby of 18 months may sit beside his/her mother banging two plates and vessels together, once in a while beating them with the ladle. A group of four to five year olds may place some leaves and flowers in a row and act as though it were a feast. All these are instances of play. Almost all self-initiated activities of children are instances of play in their natural context.



Play is a serious business for children, and children actively participate in constructing their environment. A learning environment, which allows the maximum opportunities for play, is therefore best suited for children's growth and development. During play, it will be seen that children

- are involved in what they are doing;
- almost always initiate the activity on their own;
- experience intrinsic joy;
- express curiosity and show the urge to explore.





**Learning and
play seem to
be two facets
of the same
reality**

But for children, the learning outcome is not the reason why they play.

Play also fosters

- mastery of body control
- exploration and novelty
- creativity;
- social training
- emotional balance
- language skills

The objectives of early childhood education, then are very similar to these attributes of play. Learning and play seem to be two facets of the same reality.

Why play is important

Young children's growth and development has a pattern and sequence which is related to age. Children progress in several areas such as in physical growth, capacity for language, comprehension or in skills of interaction. Children need to move in order to master body control; they need to explore, manipulate objects and repeat actions to exercise their mental, social and manual skills, with enough opportunities to handle materials, experience the world around them, and perform tasks of increasing complexity. Children get nourishment for their growth needs through play.

In the formative years between birth to the age of six, children must be in an environment that enhances their major domains of growth physical, motor, comprehension and communication skills. Their environment must give them enough impetus and challenge. This is done by providing them adequate experiences with objects, and in interactions, and by enabling them to indulge in activities which appeal to their basic playful nature.

Modern thinking on education affirms that the goal of teaching-learning process is to teach children "how to learn", that is, to explore, discover and practise thinking skills, and process information so as to understand the world around. This cannot be "taught" it has to be learnt.



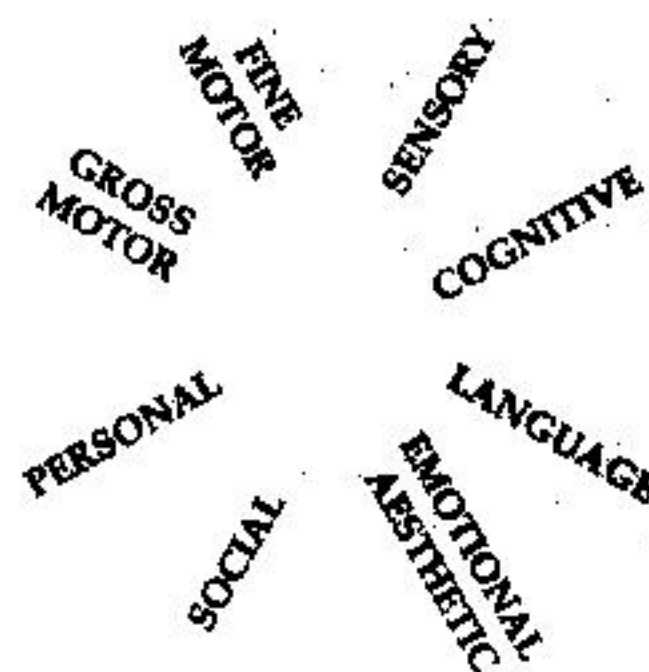
Teachers hence must know

- the needs, abilities and interests of children in relation to age
- the patterns of interaction and activities that will foster development in all domains and
- the diverse social and cultural practices, concerns and values that influence children's development.

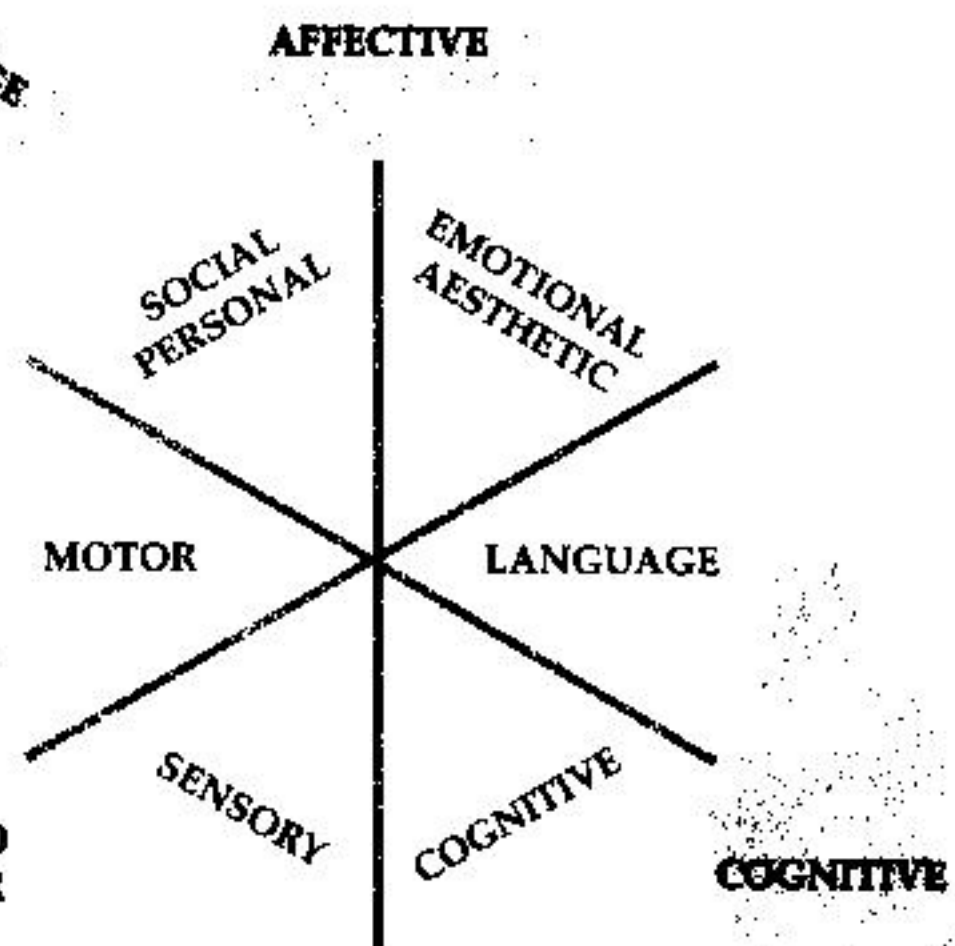
Domains of development

The child's development can be thought of in different domains (or aspects). These are all intimately interrelated and interdependent and interact with each other, so it may be often difficult to separate them. Yet it is important to do so, lest any domain is neglected and curriculum can be planned to attend to all domains and achieve holistic development. The two diagrams below divide development in different ways. Alternative A shows eight domains and Alternative B shows six. The latter has been used in this book

Alternative A



Alternative B



Play-based activities for development

Development in each domain can be fostered by giving each child a chance to participate in a wide variety of play-based activities. These activities allow the child to engage actively in the process, to learn, practice and master skills at each level, to test and evaluate, and to develop self-confidence and motivation to achieve.

The chart opposite suggests activities to promote development in each domain.

While several activities have been suggested for each domain, it must be emphasized that every activity addresses several domains. For convenience, each activity has been shown only once, but would have an impact in other domains too.

For example, in a drawing activity, the children are not only perfecting a small motor skill they are also learning to:

- share (social and emotional skills)
- follow directions (listening or language skills)
- copy a visual pattern (visual or sensory skills)
- visualise the object (cognitive and imaginative skills)

Again, sand play leads to social, cognitive, sensory and language development. Therefore one should view each and every activity in terms of its potential to speed up the development of the whole child.

In general, the activities for each area should move from easy to more demanding. For example, for small motor learning, arranging shells or stones on diagrams drawn on the floor could be done before the children use paper, crayons and pencils.

Ideally, two or three activities from each of the domains should be presented every week. The activities need not be followed in the same order as given. They can be graded and arranged to suit varying needs.

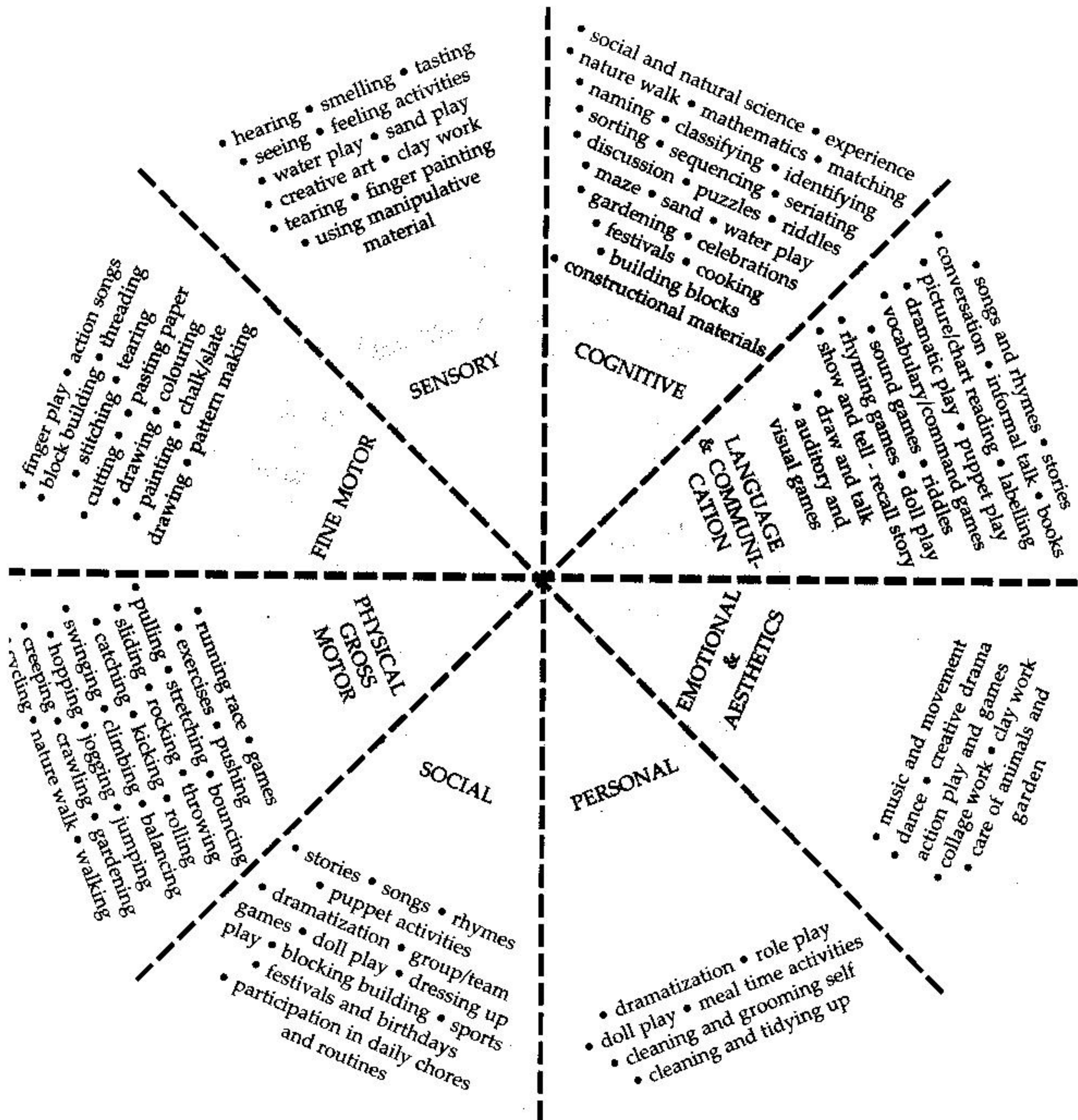
Knowing the child

It is imperative for parents and teachers to understand children's needs, abilities and interests at every age and stage of development by observing their behaviour.



Give each child a chance to participate in a wide variety of play-based activities.





SUGGESTED PLAY-BASED ACTIVITIES



***They need to
shout and run
about and be
active***

The three-year old

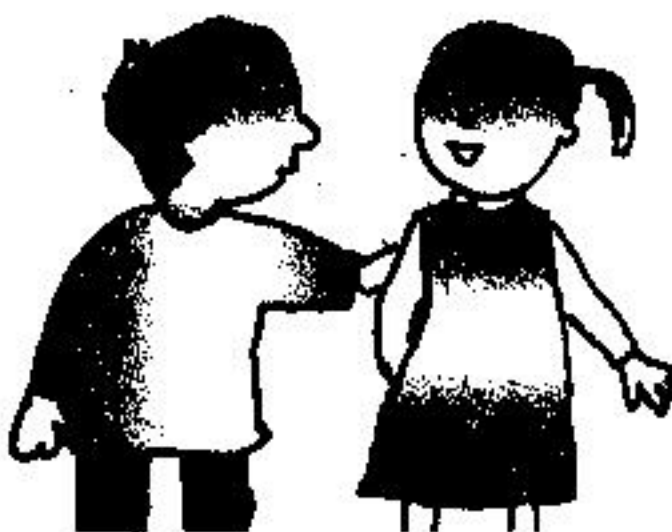
Do you know that a three-year old is very self-centred? At this age, children think largely of themselves and their own needs. They do not yet realise that others are just like them, with thoughts and feelings like their own. They still have insufficient muscular control, especially over finger movements. They enjoy playing by themselves, and do not know how to join in group play, because they cannot yet cooperate. Above all, they do not like to share toys, and may cry if they are taken away. If they are leaving their mothers for the first time, they may cling to the teacher. They like to watch and to follow. They are curious and eager to learn, but with limited speed, and they tire easily. Three-year olds love repetition.

Therefore games for the three-year old should be short, simple and amusing. They should encourage the use of the hands and fingers so that the child learns muscular control. Singing games with lots of repetition are great favourites at this age. Circle games where everyone has to act together are also popular. Games where children have to wait a long time for their turns should not be chosen as they are impatient. They need to shout and run about and be active. Teams and group games which need either cooperation or competition should be avoided. Games with too many actions and too varied, or which require the child to listen and follow instructions carefully are not appreciated at this age.

The four-year old

At the age of four, children have much better control over themselves and their bodies and can use their hands constructively. They have a wider vocabulary and can express their ideas, though not always lucidly. They enjoy playing with other children and joining in group activities and games. They love to help and are learning to cooperate, but do not understand competition. They are also beginning to be disciplined, can wait for their turn and follow instructions. They are excited by new experiences and are eager to explore and engage in new activities. They are vigorous, active and bursting with energy and sometimes even aggressive! Four-year olds cannot sit still for long.

Therefore games for the four-year old require action and movement, but now and then, they also need games with a quiet



tempo. The child still enjoys singing and rhyming games, but now these can be group or team games with each team playing alternatively, though not competing. Now the songs and rhymes can have directions, which require the child to watch, listen and imitate. As the four-year old is a little more disciplined, games that are played turn by turn can be introduced. The child learns good conduct through these activities.

The five-year old

At the age of five, children are quite independent. They have good control over their muscles and are capable of many exercises. They are self-reliant, enjoy playing with others, can cooperate and share, can sit and wait for their turn.

They love to help and to be given duties. They can remember what they are told and can take responsibility in small measures. They can even sit still for short periods and be silent, but not for long. This enables them to listen to instructions and follow directions. They are eager to go to school and to learn to read and write. They enjoy being the leader and taking initiative in new ventures. They can understand rules and follow them, and can express themselves in their mother tongue.

Therefore games for the five-year old should be such as to develop all these positive qualities fully and prepare the child for the next stage of development. Introduce team and group games, which require cooperation and sometimes competition. Language games where children have to express themselves in words and listen to and follow instructions, and memory games, which require them to remember certain rules are favourites at this age. Let the children learn to accept both success and failure. Let all of them take turns at being the leader in all group activity so that every child learns both to follow and to lead. Making minor variations in the games each time will add new challenges.

The activities in this book can be carried out in any language but preference should be given to child's 'first language'. This is also called the 'mother tongue' as most often it is the language of the mother. It could also refer to the language the child is familiar and comfortable with and is the language of the neighbourhood or community and in which the child can freely express himself/herself. This is usually the local or regional language. For the





**Let children
experience
the joy of
doing and
achieving
mastery**

children whose 'first' language is different from the classroom language, the teacher should first try to pick up a few words of the child's language and help until the child gets familiar with the classroom language.

Teachers must remember that

- young children learn best in small groups because it eliminates long waiting periods and offers more person to person opportunities.
- young children's attention span for any concentrated effort lasts for about one minute more than their age.

Some suggestions to teachers

- Introduce only one or two concepts at a time.
- Keep games simple, and make sure that instructions are clear. Try to demonstrate as much as possible, especially when introducing a new game.
- Ensure that each child has opportunity to participate, and to succeed.
- Watch for restlessness and stop when the interest wanes.
- Do not insist that every child participates in every game. Gently encourage them to take part. Recognise and reinforce child's individuality.
- Play games without winners or losers.
- Give each child a special task such as being a leader or initiator in order to foster positive qualities.
- Praise and reward children for co-operative actions, and helpfulness.
- Create situations where co-operative behaviour is needed.
- Continue to let children experience the joy of doing and achieving mastery in their own time.



The chapter on 'Organisation of Play Activities' discusses how to optimally utilize the space available, the toys, equipment and play materials needed and how to arrange them. The organisation of time - how to plan a schedule and how to use themes in an integrated- approach is also dealt with in this chapter.

The chapter on Evaluation deals with the importance of assessing the centre's performance as well as the progress made by children in their growth tide.

The appendix provides step-by-step instructions on how to make various aids and materials that can be used for activities recommended in the book.

A note on grouping

Most early childhood classrooms use various grouping methods to help children master skills.

Large groups

The large group is the natural setting for teaching listening skills such as storytelling and music, and for large motor games. Large groups are usually the whole class and include children with wide and varying abilities.

Medium groups

These are smaller groups with 8 to 15 children, or about half an average class. This grouping is done where the children need assistance and guidance. In such cases it is best if children can be divided into two groups. One group can be closely guided and helped by the teacher, while the other can be engaged in free play outdoors, or with materials in a way that requires little supervision from the teacher. They can be supervised by a helper or an assistant.

Small groups

These groups allow for individualised instruction, since it permits children of like ability or interest to come together and work on a specific task. A small group consists of six or fewer children with one adult. Many activities require working in pairs, where two children work together quietly sharing the task and discussing it. Work in small groups or pairs can be best done when the classroom is so arranged that several "corners" or spaces are created by arranging the furniture appropriately. Small groups can work in different corners without disturbing each other, and can also switch place when needed.

Often when children have had to focus on a particularly demanding activity or when they have mastered the skill they are





***Try to utilise
medium and
small groups
as much as
possible***

learning, they should be allowed to choose a toy or material like blocks or chalkboard to play with on their own.

Most of the activities in the following chapters are for large groups. The circumstances in most centres are such that large group activity is the one that can most easily, practically and conveniently be used. However, wherever possible, one must try to utilise medium, and small groups as much as possible by adapting and varying the suggested activities and thinking of new ones. Once one is able to organise the space, time and materials, one can think up many more ways in which children can be made to work individually, in pairs or in small to medium groups.



Chapter II

Children need clean surroundings, plenty of fresh air, play and exercise for healthy physical growth and development. To develop large and small muscles, children need to practice exercises, such as running, jumping, crawling, skipping and balancing which makes their bodies strong and skillful in different ways. They need to experience fun – swinging, rocking and running about, and express joy with their body. If elaborate and expensive equipments such as slides, seesaws and jungle gyms are not available easily simple materials such as ropes, balls, boxes and tyres can be used as playthings.

To plan the activities needed for physical growth and development, one should have a good understanding of the characteristics of physical development.

Characteristics of physical development

Development is orderly, progressive and results in changes that are long lasting. Physical development follows two directions, one is the 'head-to-toe' direction, that is, starting from the head and going downwards. That is why in the womb (the prenatal stage), the head, which includes the brain and the sense organs, is the first to develop, the chest and the abdomen come next and finally the legs and so the head of the infant looks bigger in proportion to his / her limbs.

The second direction that the physical development follows is from the 'centre of the body to the ends', that is, development proceeds outwards. The body parts and muscles near the axis, (the spinal cord and the trunk) develop earlier; while the parts that are farthest, (the arms, the legs, the fingers and the toes) are the last to develop. It is because of this that children use the muscles of their shoulder, before they are able to use the muscles of the fingers. Similarly children are able to control the movement of their legs before they can use their toes. Therefore children can do gross motor activities using the arms and legs much before they can do minute activity with their fingers or toes. So there should be a progression in the activities planned for physical development.

Free play

Some times it is best to encourage, under adult supervision, free play with a few simple, items and taking care to provide





Objective
*being to help
 them loosen
 up and feel
 comfortable,
 and develop
 their muscles*

enough space and time for it. While at other times organised games with easily available equipment can be conducted.

Free play gives children opportunities during the day to run, jump and dance while playing on their own with other children. Young children are characteristically very energetic and cannot sit still for several hours, so one should ensure that there is plenty of physical movement in their play.

If there are many children, they will have to be divided up into smaller groups and be given time to play outdoors in turns while the others can be engaged in other activities indoors. If there is very little or no outdoor open space, children can be taken in groups to a nearby park or garden once or twice a week, where they can play organised games and run around freely.

Free outdoor play provides children a lot of scope to choose from the available materials and also the freedom to move from one to the other. The main objective being to help them loosen up and feel comfortable, and develop their muscles. (Some ideas for equipment for free play are given in the chapter on Organising Space.

Children should experience a sense of achievement growing out of their increasing height and weight. Children must develop motor skills - large (or gross) motor or muscle control and co-ordination of their legs and hands. Mastering of these skills can be done through the typical activities which children like to do and need to do (see Box: 1)

Box: 1

Running	Rolling	Pushing and pulling
Jumping	Swinging	Lifting and carrying
Hopping	Bouncing	Walking
Skiping	Sliding	Swimming
Throwing	Balancing	Splashing
Crawling	Rocking	Dancing
Stretching	Climbing	Kicking



Fine motor or small muscle co-ordination, that is, the development of hand and finger muscles, and eye-hand coordination, which require the movement of the fingers, wrists and hand will be dealt with in the next chapter.

Small portable swings, jungle gyms and slides, can be placed in the verandah. If even this is not possible, it would be ideal to capitalise on existing resources and easily available materials like tyres, planks, boxes, bricks and rope can be collected. Children can use them in different ways and in different activities.

Here is an example, for practising jumping using available resources :

jumping off a low wall, a stool, a step or a rock

jumping over a brick, a stone, a pole or a rope

jumping in or out of a tyre, hoop, a circle or a tub

jumping along a line, a rope, or a stick.

jumping between two stones, two lines or two ropes

jumping while holding or carrying something.

Organised Games

Free play, although good, is not enough. Children also need to play organised games in groups. It is important for them to learn and follow the rules of the game, and play together; and at the same time develop physical motor skills. There must be a balance between free play and organised games. Here are some games and activities which can be played with children for their physical development. These games will create fun and at the same time teach the children many rules of social behaviour, such as not to push, jostle or hurt others.





Activity No. 1

Objective

To control large motor movement

Group size

Large

Materials

Thick cardboard, scissors, tape recorder or rhythm instrument like drums.

Preparation

Cut out about twenty cardboard foot - shapes. Arrange them around the room. Place the shapes far apart to ensure that the children stretch their feet to move from one step to the other.

Attention

Tyres, gaskets, mats, polythene bags, folded newspaper or just foot shapes drawn on the floor could be used for variations.

Activity

Ask children to form a line. Play some music or beat the drums. Children walk around stepping only on the foot shapes. They stop when the music or the drum beats stop. Continue till every child has had a turn.

Variation I

Remove the card board foot steps.

Play music with a slow beat. Ask the children to continue to make big steps in free pattern around the room.

Variation II

Use cut outs of large size animal paws or birds, claws. This could be related to the theme being followed in class. e.g. Wild animals then lion's paws or eagles claws could be used.

Variation III

To reinforce alphabet and counting skills write a letter or a number on each foot print. Ask children to say the letter or number as they take each big step.





Activity No. 2

Objective

To increase control of large motor movement

To develop a sense of balance and co-ordination

To observe and follow the leader

Group size

Large

Materials

Tape recorders, rhythm instrument, rhymes, songs on animals.

Preparation

Show the child how various animals walk. Ask the children to walk like an elephant, hop like a rabbit or leap like a frog.

Activity

Play the music, ask the children to walk like the animal you call out. e.g. Elephant.

Children move around the room imitating an elephant's walk.

Variation I

Action words like jumping or skipping or dancing to music could also be used.

Variation II

Select a child as the leader. All the other children follow the leader and move around to the music. When the music stops the teacher calls out an action e.g. fly like a bird. The leader does the action and the others follow the leader.





Activity No. 3

Objective

To develop large muscle control and co-ordination

Group size

Large

Materials

A long rope, beanbag, book, bell.

Preparation

Nil

Attention

Instead of a rope a line could be drawn with chalk, (outdoors, use limestone powder or white Rangoli powder).

Preparation

To make a beanbag make a small rectangular cloth bag which when filled will be the size of your fist. Fill with different substances like beans, seeds, sand, pebbles, twigs till almost full, stitch open end firmly. Beanbags can be used for balancing, throwing, tossing, feeling etc. The bags will make different sounds and also have different weights and textures.

Activity

Stretch the rope on the ground as a long line. Let children walk on it. Give different directions as the children walk, like take small steps, big steps, walk fast or slow.

Variation I

Tie a rope to two chairs at ground level to make a rope path. Ask children to walk on the rope. Make then put one foot in front of the other and walk on a tight rope with hands stretched outwards for balance. Then make them walk with a book or a beanbag on their heads. When children reach the other end, have the rest of the class clap. Let them imagine that they are in a real circus and are tightrope walkers.

Variation II

Stretch a rope on the ground. Ask a child to hold a bell and walk on the rope from one end without shaking the bell. If the bell makes a sound the child has to start again and complete the walk on the rope without letting the bell make any noise. It should be a silent walk. A rattle or a small instrument, which makes a sound, may be used instead of the bell.



Activity No. 4

Objective

To develop large motor co-ordination

To do actions together

To learn to jump heights

To crawl on all fours.

Group size

Large

Materials

A thick rope about 20 metres long

Preparation

Nil

Attention

Holding the rope will make the children stay in a line.

Activity

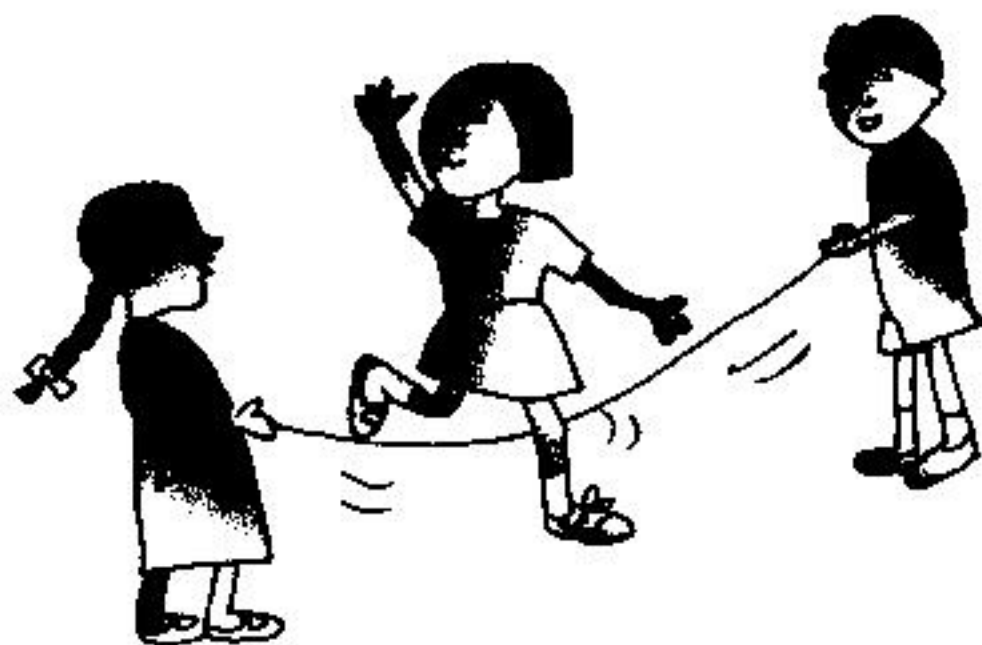
Make the children stand in a line holding a rope. Now make them walk around the playground in the form of a train. Sing a song about a train while they are walking around. The train can go fast or slow and also stop at stations. Children can also move around like a snake or a boat with the rope as oars.

Variation I

Let two children hold a rope about 6 centimetres above the ground. The others must jump the rope without touching the rope. Raise the rope a little each time the children have cleared the height.

Variation II

Let two children hold the rope up about 30 cms. above the ground. The rest of the children form a line and crawl under the rope without touching it. Lower the rope a little for each round.



WALK ALONG THE SHAPE

18

Play Activities for Child Development



Activity No. 5

Objective

To balance and walk on the line

To learn to name the shapes

Group size

Large

Material

Chalk

Preparation

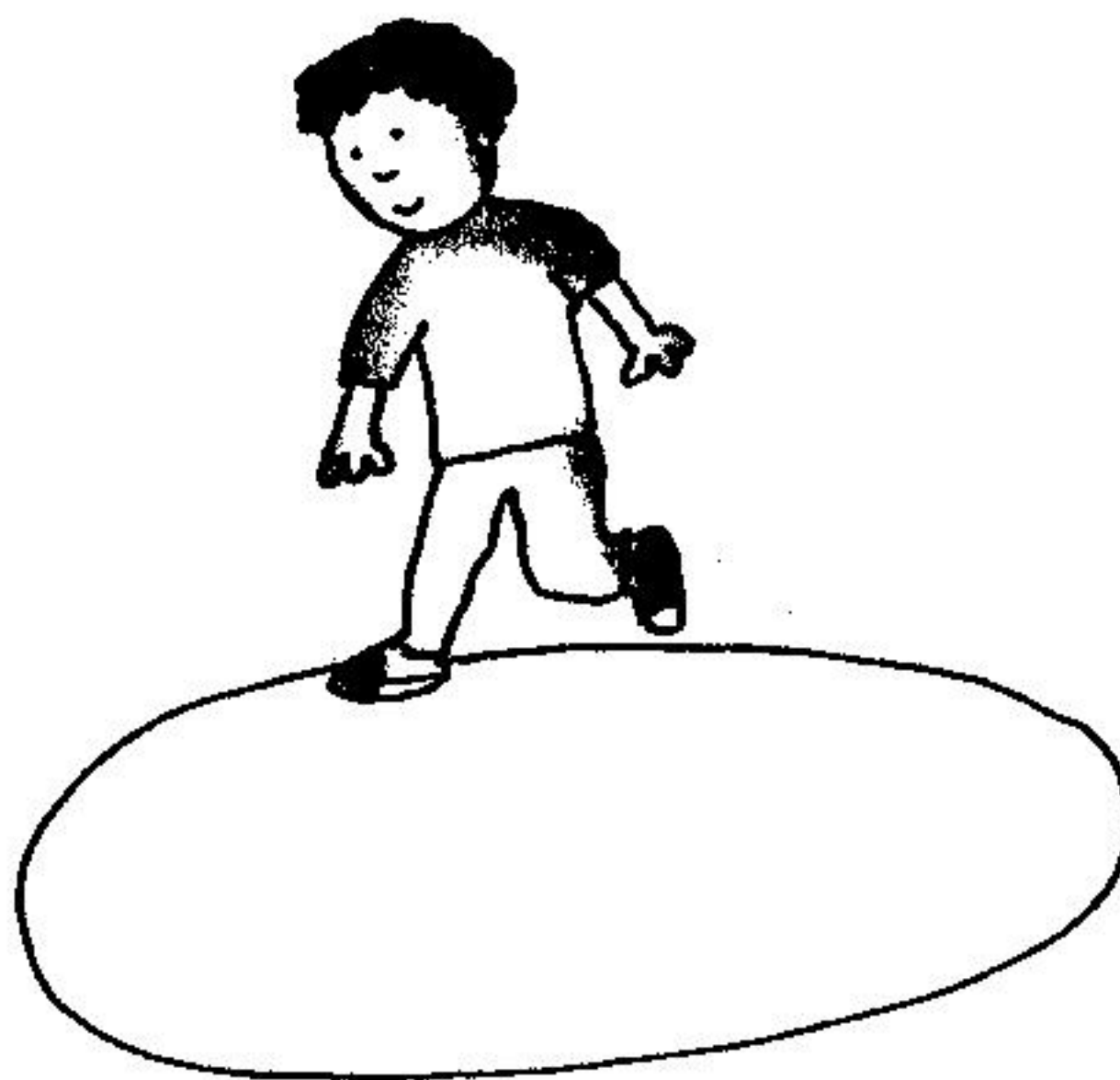
Draw different shapes on the ground. It must be big enough for children to walk on the outlines.

Activity

Make the children stand in a line at one end of the room where the shapes are drawn on the floor. Ask the children to take turns and walk on the outline of the shape that you call out. e.g. if you call out 'circle', they must walk on the circle. Call out the next shape for the next attempt.

Variation

The figure drawn on the floor could be made more complex by drawing overlapping shapes. This will be more challenging for the children.





Activity No. 6

Objective

To have control of the movement of jumping forwards and backwards

To listen to and follow instructions

Group size

Large

Materials

Chalk

Preparation

Draw a large circle on the floor

Activity

Make children stand on the outline of the circle drawn on the floor. You can stand in the middle. When you call "in", the children must jump forward into the circle, and when you call "out" the children must jump backwards out of the circle. Start the game at first saying "in" and "out" slowly. Go faster and change the sequence of your calls once they are comfortable. The child who makes a mistake is out of the game. Continue the game until only one child is left.

Variation I

Ask children to stand outside the circle. When you call the name of an animal that lives on the land, the children must jump inside the circle. When you call out the name of a bird or insect that flies, the children must jump out of the circle. e.g. 'elephant' the children jump inside the circle and 'crow' the children jump out.

Variation II

This game could be played also with living and non-living things, even and odd numbers and names of objects that begin with different sounds.



Activity No. 7

Objective

To develop skills in balance and co-ordination.

Group size

Large

Materials

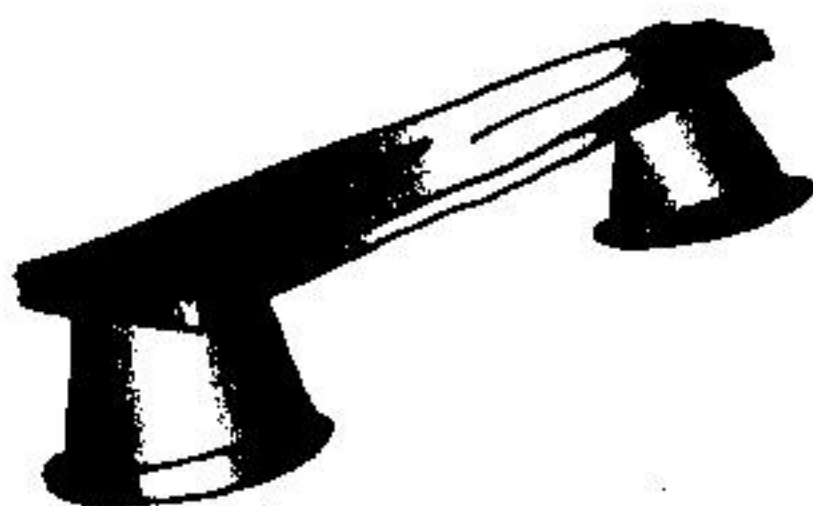
Two boxes or bricks or turned over flowerpots.
A thick plank of wood about 3 mts in length and 30 cms wide, a beanbag.

Preparation

Place the two boxes, flower pots or bricks, a few feet apart and place the plank across them, each end of the plank resting on one support.

Attention

Make children walk with arms outstretched for balance.



Activity

Let children walk on the plank from one end to other. Do it as many time as the children want until they can walk easily and without much effort.

Variation I

Now make them walk in different ways on the plank.

- Walk backwards
- Walk sideways. Move slowly across the plank.
- Walk with a beanbag on the head.
- Carry an object in one hand while walking
- Turn around and walk in the opposite direction without getting off the plank.
- Listen to the music and take steps or dance to the beat of the music.

Variation II

As the children become skilled, you can increase the height of the stands as well as the length of the wooden plank, and also use a narrower plank.

Variation III

Change the degree of slope by raising one end with a box or bricks. Ask children to walk up and down, forward and backward, on the slope.



Activity No. 8

Objective

To develop leg muscles

To play together

To follow rules

Group size

Large

Materials

Nil

Preparation

Nil

Activity

This is a common game where one child, the catcher, must catch all the other children. When a child is caught, she becomes the catcher. The game can continue as long as the children want to play.

Variation I

This is the same game with a difference. The children run around and when the catcher comes near, she/he sits to save one self. The catcher must touch the head of the child who sits down. Although she/he is safe, the child cannot get up until some other child comes and touches her/him to set her/him free. When a child gets caught, she/he in turn becomes the catcher.

Variation II

The 'tag' or catching game can become a 'chain tag'. In this game the child who is caught holds the catcher's hand and both of them chase the other children. Each time a child is caught she/he joins the chain. The chain grows longer as more children are caught. The game ends when only one child is left. The children must be careful not to break the chain while running to catch.



Activity No. 9

Objective

To develop large muscles

To gain control and balance

Group size

Large

Materials

60 – potatoes/stones/wooden blocks.

10 limes and tablespoons.

Books/beanbags to balance on the head

Chalk powder or white 'kolam' powder, whistle.

Preparation

Draw a start line. Then place the potatoes along the path in which the children will run - that is, six potatoes for each participating child. Ten children can run the race at a time on ten tracks.

Activity

Make ten children stand on the start line of their track. When the whistle is blown, the children must run to the first potato, pick it up and run back to the starting line and place it. Then they must run and pick up the next potato. In this manner pick up all the potatoes kept on their track and bring them to the start line. Let the race carry on till all the children have brought all the potatoes to the start line. Stones or wooden blocks could also be used.

Variation I

Give each child a lime and a tablespoon. Let them stand on the starting line. When the whistle is blown the children should balance the lime on the spoon and run to the finish line. If the lime falls down, the child must stop, pick up the lime, place it on the spoon and continue the race.

Variation II

Give each child an old book or a beanbag to balance on the head. Make the children stand on the start line. When the whistle is blown, the children must walk, balancing the book / beanbag on their heads.



Activity No. 10

Objective

To run an irregular course, while keeping the body under control.

To maintain balance when in motion.

Group size

Large

Material

Chalk, soft hurdles like rolled mats, cardboard boxes or soft toys.

Preparation

Draw a line on the floor with a number of curves

For the variation, arrange a long rope in different ways on the ground to resemble a path. Place a few objects at intervals along the curves/rope.

Attention

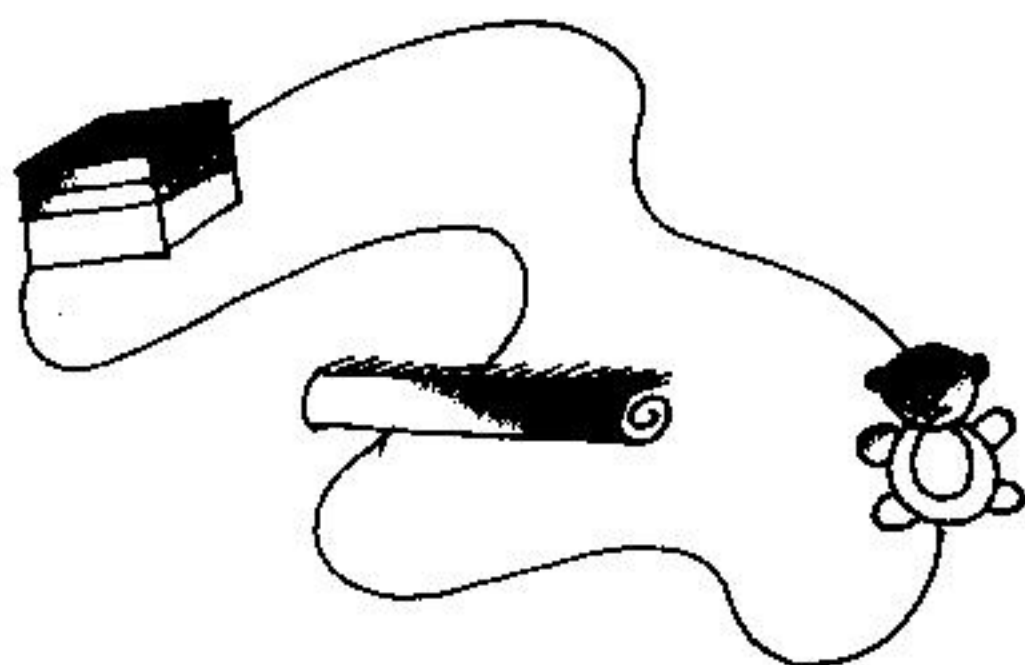
Speed is not important but maintaining balance, even when taking sharp curves or jumping over the obstacles is important.

Activity

Make the children stand at one end of the line. Let each child take a turn to run on the line, taking care not to step off the line. A rope could also be used on which the children run. Continue the race till all the children have had a chance.

Variation

Place a few obstacles (hurdles) on the path, e.g. objects like cardboard box, a rolled mat, a brick etc. at intervals. Children take turns to run and jump over the obstacles.



THROW A BALL



Activity No. 11

Objective

To develop control and reasonable accuracy when throwing a ball.

To take turns.

Group size

Large

Materials

Big balls

Large, sturdy cardboard packing box, (computer packing box) packing tape.

Preparation

Make a "catching box" by reinforcing the edges of a large cardboard box with packing tape. Cut an opening on one side for the ball to roll out. Tape one of the opening flaps to the base of the box to form a ramp. Cut out the other flaps.

Attention

Make children aware of the action of throwing (arms swing up over the head when the ball is thrown over the head)

Activity

Let a child hold the ball over the head and throw it into the box, standing at a short distance from the box. The ball will roll down the ramp out of the opening in front of the box back to the child. Draw a chalk line on the floor, about a metre from the box. Children should stand on the line and take turns to throw the ball into the box. Gradually increase the distance between the child and the box.

Variation I

A basket, bucket, hanging tyre or an outline drawn with chalk can be used instead. Another child can be made to collect the ball and throw it to the next child.

Variation II

Children form a circle. You stand in the centre and throw a ball at each child in turn and they return it to you. Smaller circles can be made with six to ten children and a child stands in the centre to throw the ball.

Variation III

Children stand in a circle. A child throws the ball to the one next to her/him. In turn this child throws to the next child. Slowly increase the distance between the children.



Activity No. 12

Objective

To increase control of hand and arm muscles.

Group size

Large

Materials

Big rubber ball.

Preparation

Draw a double line to form a broad path about 3 mts. long on the floor.

Activity

Divide the children into two groups, one group stands at one end of the path drawn on the floor and the other group at the other end. Let children take turns to roll the ball between the lines.

Variation I

The path can be made narrower as the children succeed in rolling the ball along it.

Variation II

Make the children sit cross-legged in a circle. Give them a ball and let them pretend that it is very hot to touch. The children must roll the ball quickly to each other and try not to keep it for too long.



BOUNCE THE BALL



Activity No. 13

Objective

To acquire the skill of bouncing and catching a ball.

To increase control of hand and arm muscles.

Group size

Large

Materials

Five large rubber balls.

Preparation

Draw with chalk big shapes, squares, circles and triangles of different sizes on the floor.

Attention

Give enough practice to children to bounce and catch a ball.

Activity

Let children take turns and just bounce the ball at random to a song such as the following:

"Bounce catch,
Bounce catch,
Little bouncing ball!

Bounce catch,
Bounce catch,
Never let it fall!

Throw now, throw now,
Throw it up so high!
Some folk drop the ball
But that's not you or I".

Variation

Ask all the children to sit a little away from the shapes drawn on the floor. Give a ball each to five children and let them bounce the balls, within the shapes. Count as they bounce the ball. When a child bounces the ball outside the line of the shape, he / she has to sit out and another gets the turn. In this manner every child gets a chance to bounce the ball in all the shapes.



Activity No. 14

Objective

To learn to kick with one foot with co-ordination.

To gain body control and balance.

Group size

Medium

Material

A small football.

Preparation

Nil

Attention

This activity should be monitored carefully.

Activity

Ask children to stand in a circle and kick the ball at random at each other.

Variation I

Ask children to stand in a circle and kick the ball only to a specific child. The child with the ball calls out a name and then kicks the ball towards that child.

Variation II

Make children kick the ball on to a target drawn on the wall.

Variation III

Ask the children to sit in circle with enough space between them. Let the children lean back on their hands and kick the ball. They should not touch the ball with their hands. A child kicks the ball to another child sitting opposite her/him.



Activity No. 14

Objective

To learn to kick with one foot with co-ordination.

To gain body control and balance.

Group size

Medium

Material

A small football.

Preparation

Nil

Attention

This activity should be monitored carefully.

Activity

Ask children to stand in a circle and kick the ball at random at each other.

Variation I

Ask children to stand in a circle and kick the ball only to a specific child. The child with the ball calls out a name and then kicks the ball towards that child.

Variation II

Make children kick the ball on to a target drawn on the wall.

Variation III

Ask the children to sit in circle with enough space between them. Let the children lean back on their hands and kick the ball. They should not touch the ball with their hands. A child kicks the ball to another child sitting opposite her/him.



Activity No. 15

Objective

To increase control of muscles of hands, arms and legs.

To follow instructions.

Group size

Medium

Material

A ball for each child

Preparations

Nil

Attention

Give enough time for practising the activity. You could change the activity according to the abilities of the children.



Activity

Ask children to stand in a line and pass the ball from one to the other in different ways like over the head, under the legs, with eyes closed, backwards, while hopping or jumping.

Variation I

Ask children to stand in a line. Each child should have a ball. Make them do these actions.

- Hold the ball out in front with both hands. Now hold it above the head.
- Hold the ball in front using only the fingers. Hold it above the head using only the fingers.
- Use the back of the hands to hold the ball and lift hands above the head.
- Use only elbows to hold the ball and lift hand over the head.
- Use the knees to hold the ball and try to walk.

Repeat these actions as many times as the children want.

Variation II

Make the children do simple exercises holding the ball in their hands.



Activity No. 16

Objective

To develop leg muscles

To gain body control and balance

Group size

Large

Materials

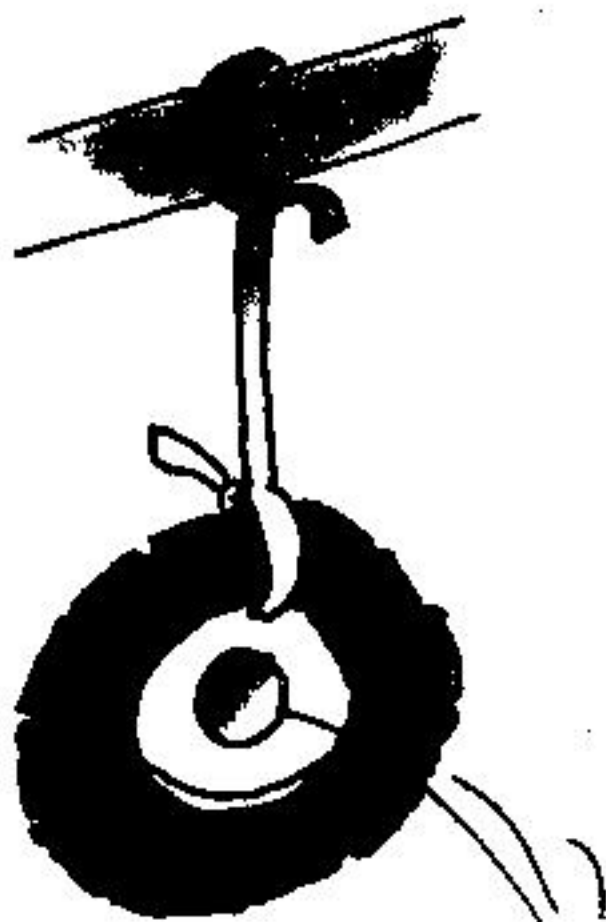
Old scooter, motor cycle, or cycle tyres.

Preparation

Nil

Attention

Tyres can be used as swings, as seats for musical chairs, for climbing or for construction and as balancing frames.



Activity

Let the children roll the tyres anywhere around in an open area. After they have learnt to roll the tyres, draw a chalk line on the ground and tell them to roll it along the line.

Variation I

Arrange the tyres on the ground in different forms and make the children jump in and out of the tyres, or jump from one tyre to the other, or walk on all fours like animals on the tyres.

Variation II

Hold up two or more tyres one behind the other to form a tunnel and ask children to crawl through it. The tyres could be buried halfway under the ground to form a tunnel. Let the children crawl through them.

Variation III

Hang a tyre at a reachable height for the children. Let children throw softball or a beanbag through it. Gradually increase the distance from which the children throw the ball.



Activity No. 17

Objective

To develop leg muscles

To listen attentively and follow directions

To understand rules

Group size

Large

Materials

Chairs or small seats, tape recorder or music player, drums, any rhythm instruments. Use cycle tyres, mats, cushions, or folded squares of newspapers for seats

Preparation

Place the chairs / mats in a circle, one less than the number of children participating in the game.

Attention

In the beginning a trial round could be given for children to understand the game.

Activity

Let children run around the circle of chairs in one direction, while you play music or beat a drum. When the music stops, every child must find a chair. The one who has no seat sits quietly for the rest of the game. Now remove one chair and continue till all but one are out.

Variation I

All the chairs are labeled with the names of the children, so that each child has a chair. When the music is stopped each child runs and sits on his/her own chair. The last child to sit down is out of the game. The chairs are not removed. The game goes on until all but one are out.

Variation II

This game is played in the open. Cycle tyres are placed in a circle, one less than the number of children participating. The children follow the teacher's directions for movement. e.g. skip, gallop, hop forwards, hop backwards etc. When the teacher stops clapping, the children run and sit inside the tyres. The child who does not get a tyre is out and will get to name the next movement to be followed.



Activity No. 18

Objective

To develop large muscle co-ordination

Group size

Large

Material

A handkerchief, or a small object

Preparation

Draw two lines about 10 metres apart with a small circle in the centre of the two lines (to place the bone/hand-kerchief)

Attention

After the children have learnt the game, numbers can be called at random.

Activity

Divide the children into two teams. Make them stand on the two lines marked on either side of the circle. Number the children in each team. When you call out a number, the two children who have that number are the "dogs" and must run to the centre and try to pick up the "bone" (handkerchief) which is placed in the circle. The one who gets the bone first runs back to his/her line and wins a point for his/her team. Call out another number and repeat the activity until all the children have had a turn of being the "dog".

Variation I

Make the children use only their right hand to pick up the bone could make the game more difficult. Their left hands must be folded and placed on the back.

Variation II

Instead of numbers, letters of the alphabet or names of animals, birds, transport or words related to the theme being followed in the class could be used.



Activity No. 19

Objective

- To develop leg muscles
- To be aware of numbers
- To learn rules

Group size

Large

Materials

Cycle tyres, sheets of newspaper, circles drawn with chalk, mats - to form the islands

Preparation

Place the islands around the room or in the playground.

Activity

Ask the children to run around in a circle while you sing or use a musical instrument or clap to a beat. When you stop, call out a number such as 2,3,4 or 5. The children must get on to an island in groups of the number called out. e.g. if you have called out three, only three children must get together on each island in a group, neither more nor less. Those groups that are formed with the wrong number of children should be asked to stand out and watch the game. Remove one or two islands each time as the game progresses. Start with small numbers and proceed to more difficult ones.

Variation

You can change the game by giving more difficult instruction e.g. "Six legs" (Means three children should climb on to an island, "four hands" (two children), 20 fingers (two children).





Activity No. 20

Objective

To control body movement
To follow direction and play together

Group size

Large

Materials

Masks or caps to show wolf and lamb

Preparation

To make masks of wolf, lamb and lion, see Appendix.

Activity

Let the children form a circle and hold hands. One child is the lamb (wears lamb mask) and is inside the circle; and another child is the wolf and is outside the circle (wears wolf mask). The wolf goes around the circle calling out "Is the lamb at home?" and the children say, "No". When the children say "Yes", the wolf tries to break the circle and get inside to catch the lamb. The children should hold hands tight and not allow the wolf to enter the circle. If the wolf enters the circle, the children should allow the lamb to get out. If the wolf catches the lamb, these two children join the circle, and two others become the lamb and the wolf.

Variation

One child is the lion (wears lion mask) and the others are the goats. The lion stands at one end of the room or playground with his back to the others. The goats creep up behind the lion and say, "What is the time?" the lion answers "One o'clock" or "Four o'clock". When the lion says "Time for dinner" he turns around and tries to catch the goats. If a goat is caught, that child becomes the lion.

Chapter III

Children learn about the world around them by using their senses. While playing they see, hear, touch and move, taste and smell. This sensory experience and discrimination forms the basis for the development of concepts.

The six senses

- **See (Visual)** - Visual impressions are one of the most important and valuable sources of learning for young children. They learn to experience and name the different colours, shapes, sizes and patterns that they see, not only in the natural world and in material objects, but also in people. They gradually learn to discriminate between the various sights, sounds and other sensory experiences. Learning to discriminate shapes and patterns, for example, is an essential preparation for learning to read and write.
- **Hear (Auditory)** - Sounds are important to children, and interest in sounds, and the capacity to listen and to discriminate sounds, contribute to the development of speech. Children discover many sounds on their own as they explore materials, but they must be helped to identify and listen to individual sounds. They can be given experiences to listen to real life sounds, a bird's chirp, the sound of an aeroplane, the ticking of a clock or the rustling of leaves.
- **Touch (Tactile)** - Children are responsive to the feel of things. They learn from touching and feeling and need a wide variety of experiences with touching in order to develop adequate understanding of the world around them. They can be provided with many experiences of touching and be encouraged to use the correct descriptive words for the feel of various things. A "feely/ magic box" with a collection of different textured objects gives children a wide experience of feel of things.
- **Taste (Gustatory)** - Children can identify good and bad taste. But they must be encouraged to use appropriate terms such as sweet, sour, bitter, salty etc. to differentiate the variety of taste in food they eat everyday.
- **Smell (Olfactory)** - There are many kinds of pleasant and unpleasant smells in the child's immediate environment e.g. smell of food, soaps, flowers, clothes etc. Describing smells





Unstructured play, structured activities and exploration with a variety of objects and sensations are important in the early development of sensory motor skills.

increases children's ability to express their perceptions and to describe their experiences.

- **Moving and Doing. (Kinesthetic and Manipulative).** The sense of bodily movement is also one of the senses that forms the experience on which the child's learning is based. Movement activities have already been described in the last chapter. Equally important for fine motor development is "doing" things with hands and fingers, manipulating various materials and objects.

A set of simple activities to help develop fine motor skills and eye-hand coordination can be seen in Box: 2

Box: 2

Finger play	Manipulative materials like clay, water and sand
Blocks	Rolling marbles
Drawing	Finger painting
Picking	Picking and sorting small objects
Beads threading	Cutting with scissors
Paper tearing	

Unstructured play, structured activities and exploration with a variety of objects and sensations are important in the early development of sensory motor skills. Children learn by interacting with the concrete or real objects, and the people who are part of their environment. They use their senses to distinguish the different qualities of different objects. They learn that objects come in different shapes, sizes and colours, that things may be soft or hard, rough or smooth, and may have different smells and tastes or make different sounds. This is important not only for the development of all the sensory and motor skills, but also for maintaining a high level of interest in their learning. In playing with clay, or beads, or construction blocks, they learn to gain control over hand and finger movements, to practise eye-hand co-ordination, and experience the joy of mastery over objects and materials in the world.

Whenever appropriate, have children use more than one sense organs e.g. eating a banana - let them see, feel, taste and smell it.





Activity No. 1

Objective

To locate sounds

To listen carefully and attentively.

Group size

Large

Material

Any musical instrument or a bell, or toy drum, a plate and a spoon etc.

Activity

Ask children to sit in a circle. Blindfold any one child and make the blindfolded child sit in the centre of the circle. Make sounds vocally or with an instrument from different locations in the room. Ask the child to point to the direction of the sound. Give each child a turn to guess.

Variation I

Make one child go out of the room. The rest hide a buzzer or any object that makes noise such as timepiece etc. in a part of the room. Call the child in and ask the child to find the object.

Variation II

Ask children to sit in a circle. Blindfold one child. Ask another child to move around the room making sounds. The blind folded child must follow the direction of the sound and find the person.

Variation III

Ask children to sit in a circle. Ask them to close their eyes and keep absolutely silent for a moment and listen to the sounds they can hear. Then ask children what they have heard. Give clues and make the child aware of sounds in their environment.





Activity No. 2

Objective

To distinguish between loud and soft sounds.

Group Size

Large

Materials

Objects that make sound such as drums, whistle, a bell.

Preparation

Nil.

Activity

Seat children in a circle and ask them to be very quiet. Make a loud or soft sound like clapping hands, whispering, dropping a book, shouting, bursting a balloon, slamming a door, walking, jumping etc. Let each child in turn identify the sound that you have made as loud or soft. Children take turns to make loud and soft sounds and the rest of the class describes.

Variation

Give a drum or a bell or a whistle to one of the children. Ask him/her to make a sound that is soft or loud. Give directions such as loud - louder - soft - softer - silence (no sound). Let children by turns give instructions and the class make sounds accordingly.





Activity No. 3

Objective

To make sounds using only the different parts of the body.

To keep to rhythm and work together

Group size

Large

Materials

Nil

Preparation

Nil.

Activity

Ask children to stand in a circle. Give them a few ideas of making sounds like jumping, clapping, rubbing hands, hitting the hands, clicking the tongue, smacking lips, blowing and so on. Then each child is given a turn and has to make a sound with his/her body and the others imitate him/her. The game can continue as long as the children can come out with new ideas.

Variation I

Form a 'body orchestra'. Divide the children into groups of four or five. Let each group make one kind of sound like blowing, whistling, clicking the teeth, snapping fingers, stamping, clapping, rubbing hands etc. Teach each group their sounds in time to a simple rhythm. Give them enough practice. Now to begin the game, call one group to make their sound keeping to the rhythm of a simple song they all know. In this manner each group makes its sound when called, in time to the rhythm or tune. Then you call out "every one join", and the whole group makes their sounds together and you have your "body orchestra".



Activity No. 4

Objective

To listen carefully

To be aware that different objects make different sounds.

Group size

Large

Materials

Objects that make different sounds - a bell, a rattle, a ball, pieces of wood, a metal plate or a cup, scraps of paper.

Preparation

Nil.

Activity

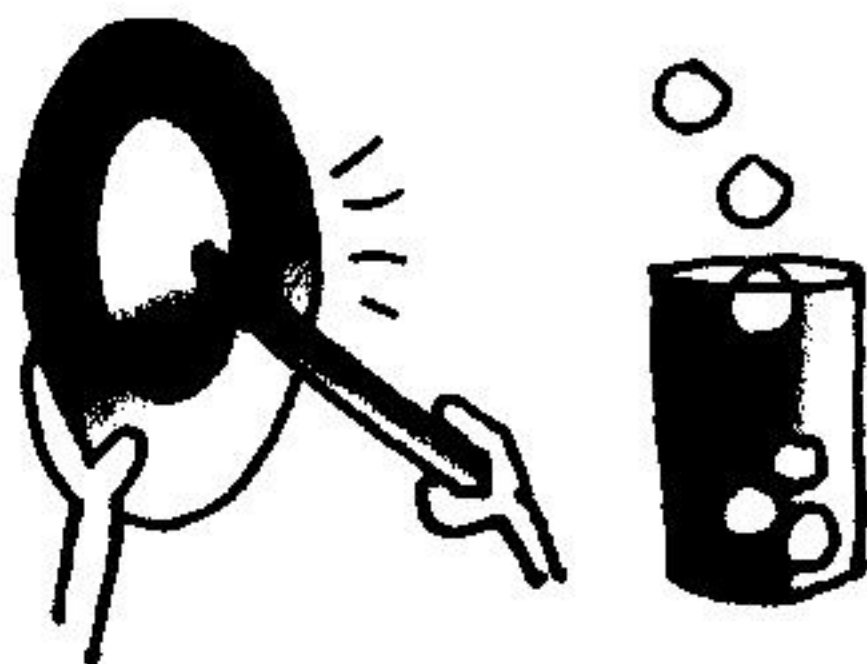
Make sounds with each object using different methods - striking the pot or a metal plate with a stick, shaking a box or a tin containing stones, tearing or crushing paper, rubbing two spoons together, bouncing a ball, or splashing water. Ask children to listen carefully and name or describe the particular sound. To play the game, the children sit in a circle and close their eyes. Make a sound and ask a child to name it. Continue till every child has guessed one sound correctly.

Variation I

Instead of children closing their eyes, you could play the game by making the sound from behind a screen, so that the children cannot see the object.

Variation II

As in the first game, show the children the articles you have collected and let them hear the different sounds they make. When the children close their eyes, make three different sounds with three different objects. Let the children take turns to come forward and repeat the three sounds in the correct order.





Activity No. 5

Objectives

To develop the sense of smell

To differentiate the smell of a number of materials and classify them as sweet, pungent or bad.

Group size

Medium

Materials

Different smelling substances like onion, dhania, rose petals, chillies, rubber, and small cloth bags or tins.

Preparation

Place a little of each of the substances into different bags and stitch them up. Or use small tins with a small hole on the lid.

Attention

Children must have smelt the substances before they are put into bags, and they must be familiar with the smell as well as the substance.

Activity

Place about two or three bags on the table. Make each child come forward. Let them smell substances with their eyes closed without touching the bag. Ask questions about the hidden content. e.g. What do you smell? Is it sweet? dry? or pungent? When all the children have had a try and have identified the smell you could add a few more bags of substances and continue the activity.

Variation I

Ask children to collect and bring to class different types of smelling objects. The children take turns to describe the smell of their object. Ask questions and lead a discussion in the class. These substances can then be labelled and displayed.

Variation II

The different smelling substances brought to the class can be sorted and classified by placing on trays as sweet smelling, pungent, bad smelling etc.



Activity No. 6

Objective

To develop the sense of taste

To learn words that specify different tastes like sweet, sour, hot, bitter etc.

Group size

Small

Material

Small quantities of sugar, salt, roti / chapathi / bread, lime, fruits, and other eatables with different tastes.

Preparation

Nil

Activity

Talk about different tastes using words such as sweet, sour, hot, bitter, salty and flat. Ask a child to close her/his eyes and place a little bit of one of the foods on her/his tongue. The child must taste and guess what it is. You could ask the question, "How do you know?" and encourage the child to discuss the taste.

Variation I

Ask children to collect and bring to class foods with different tastes. Each child must describe the taste of her/his food. Ask questions and lead a discussion in the class. Then label the foods and display.

Variation II

Ask children to classify the foods with different tastes, by placing them in different trays according to their taste like sweet, sour, hot, bitter, etc.



Activity No. 7

Objective

To recognise qualities of soft and hard in objects

To use the words soft and hard to identify such qualities in objects

To sort objects as soft and hard

Group size

Medium

Material

A number of soft and hard objects like cotton ball, pompom, pieces of soft sponge, wool, fur, pebbles, keys, coins, washers paper clips, spoons, pencils, soft pillow and a plastic tray.

Preparation

None

Attention

At first use objects that are easy to distinguish e.g. cotton ball for soft and key for hard. This will encourage children to explore and participate in the play activity.

Activity

Spread the objects in front of the children on the table. Pick up each object and talk about it. Make the children feel each object, squeezing it in their hands, to know which are soft and which are hard. Now remove all the objects and place one object on a child's hand. The child has to squeeze it and identify the quality of the object as hard or soft. Give a chance to all the children.

Variation I

Place a soft pillow and a plastic tray on the table. Discuss with the children the soft/hard quality of the objects. Place all the objects in a box on the floor. Children take turns to select an object, feel it for its quality and place the soft ones on the pillow, and the hard objects in the tray.

Variation II

Make a display board of soft and hard objects collected by the children. The objects can be fixed to a chart paper with an adhesive.



Activity No. 8

Objective

To develop the sense of touch

To distinguish similarities and differences by texture

To understand concepts such as smooth, rough and very rough surfaces.

Group size

Medium

Material

Collect two pieces each of materials of different textures, such as Khadi, silk, nylon, sandpaper, paper of different textures and a sheet of chart paper.

Preparation

From each of the pairs of material collected, paste one on the chart paper.

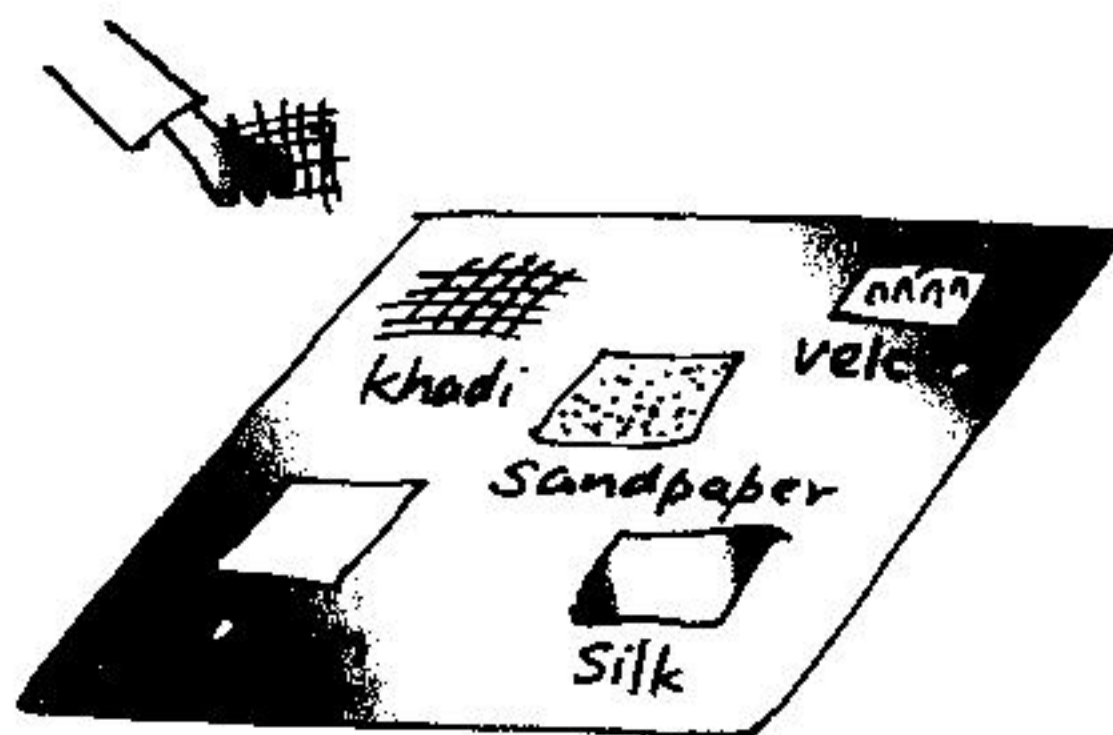
Activity

Seat the children in a circle on the floor. Place the chart paper in the centre on the floor.

Distribute the other pieces of material to the children one for each child. Let each child come forward and match his/her piece with the one on the floor. The other children must check to see if the matching is correct. Children can also discuss and describe the texture of the piece they have.

Variation

Make children sit in a semi-circle and call one child at a time. Spread out three cards with obvious differences in textures. Ask the child to touch the cards and explain what they feel like, rough, smooth or very rough.





Activity No. 9

Objective

To learn to count by feel, without looking

To feel and count

Group size

Large

Material

Small objects like marbles, pebbles, shells and seeds

Preparation

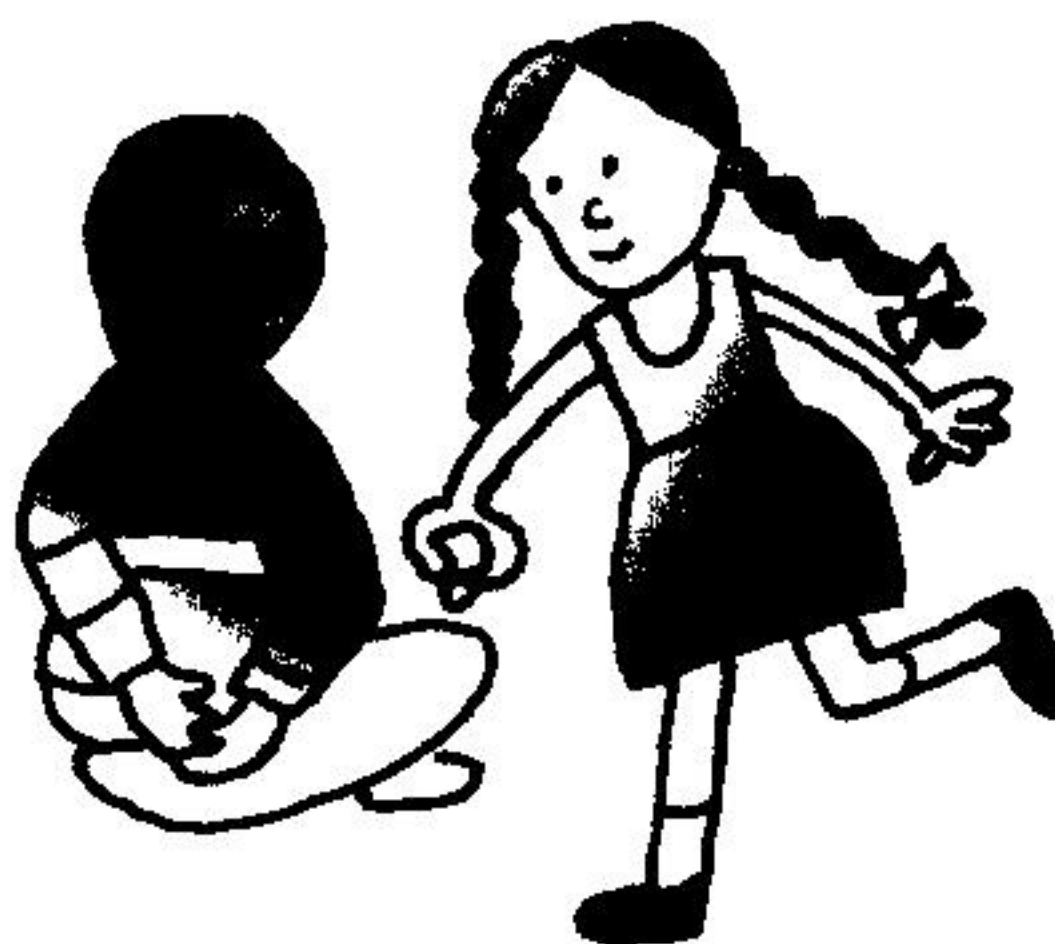
Nil

Attention

The number of objects put in the hand must be a few in the beginning. e.g. 3 or 4. Slowly increase the numbers.

Activity

Ask children to sit in a circle with hands cupped open behind their backs. Give one child a bag of small objects like beads. Ask her to run around the circle and put a few beads into the cupped hands of one of the children. This child must count the number of beads just by feeling, and without looking and call out the answer. Then place it in front of the class for the whole group to count and check the answer. If the child has counted correctly, he/she is given the chance to put the objects in the hands of the next child.



**Activity No. 10****Objective**

To experience walking without seeing

To follow direction

Group size

Large

Material

Handkerchief or scarf to tie around the eyes of children.
A thick long rope.

Preparation

Stretch the rope on the floor to form a long line.

Activity

Blindfold a child and make him/her walk with a foot on either side of the rope without touching the rope. Let each child take a turn at walking with their feet on either side of the rope.

Variation I

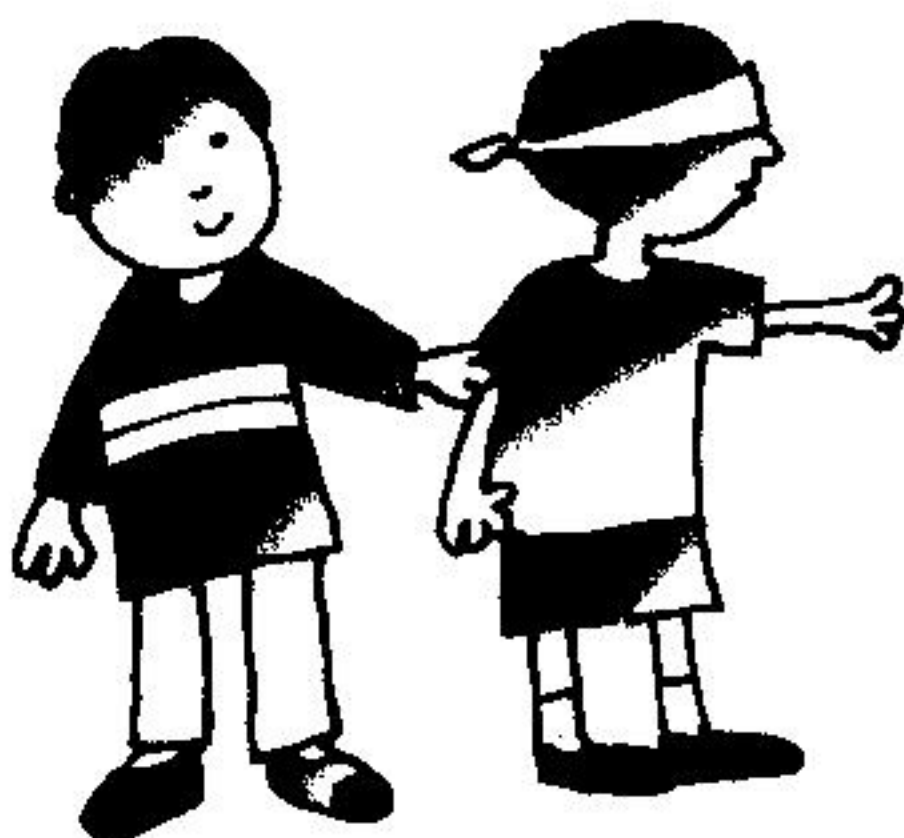
Tie five to six ropes to chairs at a height of 3 to 4 inches from the floor. Keep them apart so that the children have to take one step to cross over each rope at a time. After they have practised stepping over the ropes, blindfold them and make them step over the ropes one at a time.

Variation II

Pair up the children. Blindfold one child. Give a task to be done, e.g. walk across the room, or go out of the door or touch a particular person, or an object. With the help of the partner, the blind folded child carries out the task.

Variation III

In this game the partner is not allowed to touch the blindfolded partner, but must lead across the room only by giving verbal instructions of what to do, like "Move to the left, take a step forward".





Activity No. 11

Objective

To develop dexterity of fingers

To develop eye hand co-ordination

Group size

Medium

Material

Large brown sheets of paper, old newspaper, large patterns of simple animals or other objects, paints, staple pins, scissors, and old socks.

Preparation

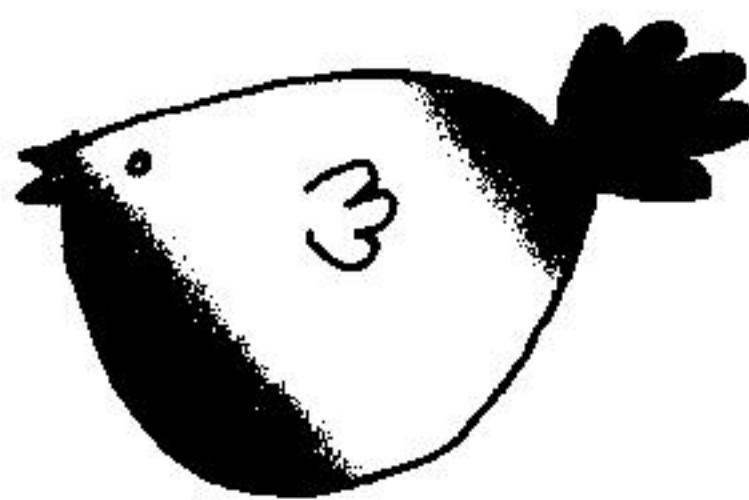
Cut two large shapes of animals with the brown paper and staple them together, leaving a space for stuffing.

Activity

Give each child a sheet of newspaper and ask them to tear it up into pieces and, crumple them into small balls and stuff them into the animal shapes through the opening carefully without tearing the shapes. After stuffing it full staple the opening. Let children paint the features or cut out eyes nose etc. from coloured paper and stick on the animal. Display the toy animals where everyone can see them. These stuffed animals could be given to the children to play with.

Variation

Make children stuff old socks with crumpled newspaper bits and make a sock puppet. Decorate the puppet with wool and paper. Insert a stick into the socks and tie near the neck of the puppet. Let children stage a puppet show. The script could be yours or a story they know or they could make up their own story.





Activity No. 12

Objective

To experience the feel of tearing paper

To develop eye hand co-ordination

Group size

Large

Materials

Sheets of old newspaper

Preparation

Nil

Attention

Give plenty of time to practise tearing out shapes. The torn papers can be used later for making paper mache.

Activity

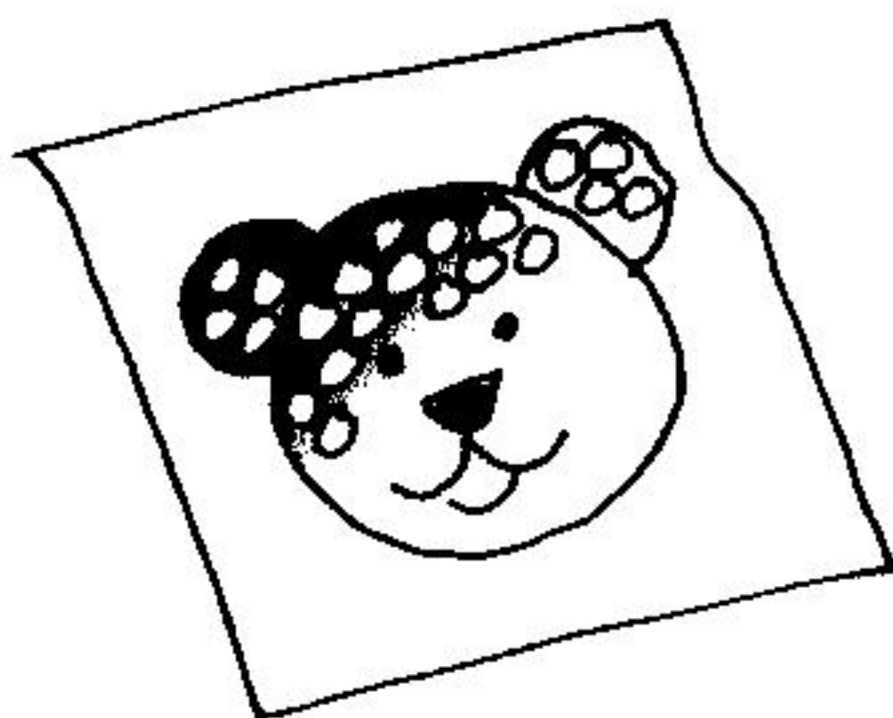
Give children a large piece of paper and let them tear it anyway they like. Let children then describe what they have torn out. This could be displayed in the classroom.

Variation I

Let children tear small pieces of paper roll them into small balls. Give paste and large sheets of paper and let them stick the balls on the larger paper to make a picture. When dry, this could be painted.

Variation II

Give each child a sheet of paper and some thread. Let them crumple half a sheet of paper into a small ball. Direct the children to keep pressing till they get a good round shape. Now help children to tie the thread around the ball. Make them apply paste on the strips of paper and roll this around the ball. Cover the whole ball with strips of paper. Keep aside to dry. Children can paint the ball when it is dry.





Activity No. 13

Objective

To use the five senses while going for a nature walk

To develop curiosity

To learn to discuss about things they have seen

Group size

Large

Materials

Pencil and paper, small boxes or baskets to collect nature objects

Preparation

Nil

Activity

Take children on a nature walk to a park or a garden. Ask them to close their eyes for 30 seconds and listen quietly.

Then ask the children to describe the sounds that they heard. Stop at different places to hear different sounds. List all these for later discussion.

Then ask children to lie on the grass and stretch out. Ask them to look out for five different plants within their reach. See if they can find any insects crawling in the grass

Then make them walk on and collect objects which feel different in texture, like a smooth stone, a rough bark, hairy leaf, soft leaf, etc. Feel and discuss.

Collect objects of different colours, and leaves of different greens. Arrange the leaves from the lightest to the darkest green, or from longest to smallest, widest to narrowest, or by different shapes.

Variation

After the nature walk, display in the class all the different things the children have collected. Discuss the different senses they experienced.



Activity No. 14

Objective

To develop finger dexterity

To develop taste for design and colour

Group size

Medium

Materials

Flower petals, small leaves, colour chalk, rangoli powder (white and coloured). A few hardboards (60x60 cms.)

Preparation

Draw simple designs with a wet chalk on the hard boards or on the floor

Attention

After the activity the powder can be collected and preserved for another day. Instruct children to handle flowers gently. Do not let them crush or crumple them.

Activity

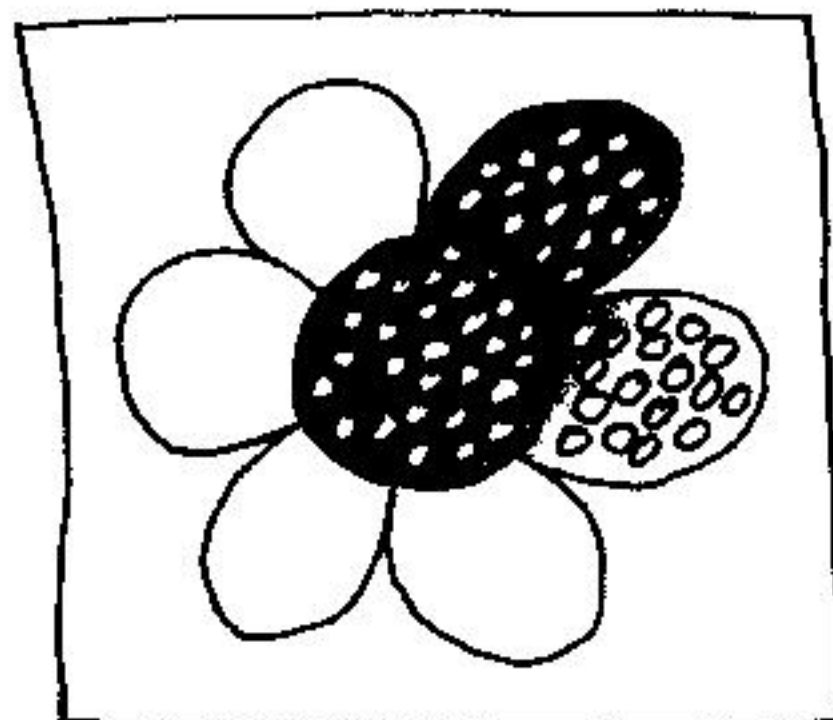
Give flowers and let children shred the petals. Let children fill in the rangoli designs with the petals and small leaves. This activity will be interesting and colourful.

Variation I

Children can also use other materials like sand, shells, small seeds, pebbles etc., which can be arranged along the lines of the rangoli patterns, or used to fill up the spaces.

Variation II

Demonstrate how the powder should be spread on the rangoli pattern with only the fore finger and thumb. Let children fill the powder in the designs.





Activity No. 15

Objective

To express their feelings freely

To develop finger and hand muscles

Group size

Medium

Material

Colour powder, maida paste, paper, water, old serving trays, plastic trays, or a surface that can be washed easily.

Preparation

To make the maida paste of a semisolid consistency, take a tablespoon of maida in half a cup of water, mix and cook on a low flame.

Attention

Wearing an apron will protect the children's clothes. Then make children wash their hands properly. If the activity is done on any flat surface, like a stone floor out of doors, the paste and powder can be directly put on the surface.

Activity

Place a little maida paste and colour powder in the tray. Add water if the paste is too thick. Give each child a serving tray. Let the children spread the paste and powder on the tray with their hands. Then let them draw or make impressions on the spread out layer of paste. After the children have finished this, take a paper, cover the paste, press down and take an impression of what the children have drawn.

Variation I

After the impression of what the children have drawn is taken on the paper, children can stick small pieces of paper on their finger painting.

Variation II

A comb or notched cardboard drawn through the spread paint will give a good design.



CLAY

Activity No. 16

Objective

- To develop finger muscles
- To experience the feel of clay
- To make objects

Group size

Medium or small

Material

Potters clay or clay powder, water

Preparation

Mix the clay with water to make dough, easy to mould not too wet.

Attention

Cleaning up, of both the children and the area, is an important need after using clay. Allow time for this and keep your cleaning gear ready. If the model is to be

preserved, dry in a cool place for a few days and then paint with poster paint when dry.

To preserve the clay, store in a large pot or bucket. Cover it with a wet cloth and keep moist by regularly sprinkling water on it. If the clay dries up and becomes hard, pound it into powder and remix with water.

Activity

Divide children into small groups and make them sit in small circles. Distribute a generous amount of clay to each child. Give each child a piece of cardboard, thickly folded newspaper or if possible a tray or board to work on. Ask the children to mould the clay into shapes. Let them first explore the feel of the clay by rolling, pressing, squeezing in different ways to make different shapes. The children will make simple shapes like balls, discs, long cylinders etc. Name these – laddu, dosa, chapati, snake etc. and help the children to imagine more shapes. Join some of the simple ones to make exciting new ones.

Variation

Give out small spoons, sticks, match sticks etc. with which the children can sculpt the clay as they like and make models.



Activity No. 17

Objective

To experience the feel of sand

To develop eye-hand co-ordination

To express feelings

To create shapes

Group size

Medium or small

Materials

Clean riverbed/sea sand.

Accessories for sand play include cups and containers of various shapes and sizes, coconut shells, sieves, spoons, spades, sticks and digging tools, besides pebbles, stones, leaves, flowers, sticks and other objects for decoration.

Preparation

Wet some area of the sand, and provide a little water.

Attention

Supervise to see that children do not put sand in their mouths or eyes or on other children. Cleaning up of children and the sandpit, and collecting the accessories is an important activity after sand play.

Activity

Let children play in the sand with cups/spades etc. to make sand cakes, mountains, houses etc. as they like. Let them use their imagination and plan in groups. You can make suggestions and encourage free talk.

Variation I

Give both dry and wet sand, and let them play. Discuss the differences between dry and wet sand and give containers of different shapes, coconut shells and sieves to play with.

Variation II

Let children collect sticks, stones, and leaves or use toys to arrange models and scenes made by them. Let them describe what they have built.



Activity No. 18

Objective

To experience the feel of water

To learn about the properties of water

Group size

Small or medium

Materials

Clean water in a large tub.

Accessories include small mugs, containers of various sizes, straws, tubes, funnels, and sieves.

Preparation

Nil

Attention

Use plastic aprons if possible and have a towel to dry the children. Spare clothes may be needed if they get wet.

Have the water play outdoors so that the room is not made wet or dirty, and cleaning and drying becomes fast and easy. Care should be taken that the children do not drink the soap water.

Activity

Let the children play in the water by pouring, filling, splashing, floating, stirring, and so on.

Variation I

Give children a large jug and a cup. Make children fill the jug and count the number of cups of water needed to fill it.

Variation II

Give some transparent bottles and ask children to pour one cup of water in each bottle. Talk about the different levels of water.

Variation III

Provide children some cloth and soap and make them wash clothes and put to dry.

Variation IV

Provide a small watering can. Make children water plants.

Variation V

Give two tubs of water, one with cold and the other with warm water. Let children play and experience the different temperatures.

Variation VI

Make a solution of soap with water. Give children drinking straws and make them blow bubbles.

MAKE A NECKLACE



Activity No. 19

Objective

To learn to thread

To develop eye-hand co-ordination

To learn to arrange in a pattern

Group size

Medium

Material

Thick thread, string or shoe lace, wooden beads, flowers or leaves, empty thread spools, hand-made beads of clay or paper.

Preparation

To make threading easy for the children, dip the end of the string or thread in maida paste or glue and dry. This will make it stiff and easy for the children to handle.

To make magazine paper beads, cut a sheet of paper into four strips, tapering one end of the strip. Roll the strips on a stick/ knitting needle, starting from the broad side of the strip. Roll to the end and stick the narrow end to form a bead. Remove from stick/needle and let it dry. Make enough for children to thread.

Activity

Seat children in a circle with all the objects in the centre. Give each child a string. Ask children to make a necklace with the beads/leaves etc., copying the pattern on the board that you have already drawn. After the children have mastered the copying of your patterns, encourage children to make their own patterns.

Variation I

To make the game more interesting, give other materials to thread, such as cigarette packs or empty thread spools or pieces of cardboard with a hole in the centre or soft drink bottle covers with a hole pierced in the centre.

Variation II

Make beads from magazine paper and give to children for threading and making patterns.



Activity No. 20

Objective

To introduce the five senses

To understand the use of the senses

Group size

Small

Materials

Two wooden blocks for each child.

Chart paper and magazines.

Preparation

Nil

Attention

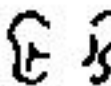
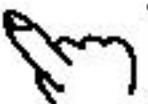
If the child places the rose in the 'eye' column and the ice cream in the 'nose' column ask for reasons. Allow for such individual choices.

Activity

Seat children around a table, and talk about the five senses. Make children point to their eyes, ears, nose, mouth, fingers and talk about them. Now give each child two wooden blocks. Explain that these blocks will help in discovering their senses. Ask the children to use their blocks to experience the sense of seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting and touching.

Variation

Draw a table on a chart paper with five columns. Draw a picture in each column to represent different senses. Give children old magazines and scissors and let them cut out pictures, which relate to these senses. Then let them take turns and stick their picture in the appropriate column e.g. rose – in the nose column and ice cream in the mouth column.

To help children develop cognitive skills, one should have an understanding of children's thinking abilities and the processes by which they learn to think.

Thinking skills

The basic processes of thinking, or cognitive skills, are the gradual development of the following abilities:

- to discriminate through the five senses, sight, hearing, touch, smell and taste
- to recognise and match similar things
- to identify, name and match objects
- to seriate (i.e.), arrange in order along any one dimension
- to observe, remember and recall
- to classify on the basis of concepts or dimensions, e.g. shape or colour
- to repeat a pattern or to make a logical sequence, e.g. games of repeating patterns, or recalling events and stories in correct sequence, and
- to solve problems and reason, e.g. solving puzzles and mazes.

According to Piaget, the development of thinking ability in all children progresses through four stages as shown in Box: 3. The timing and pace at which they move through these stages may vary from child to child.

Children's cognitive abilities

Some of the cognitive *abilities and skills* that children aged 3-5 years acquire are :

- Taking another person's perspective – children at this stage are egocentric in thinking, that is, they think of only themselves and cannot understand that the other person can look at the same things in a different way and arrive at different conclusions.
- Matching - three and four year olds can match identical objects from a collection of objects, can discriminate between same and different, and understand the concepts of similarity and difference.



Box: 3

Stage of Cognitive Development	Age	Characteristics
Sensory-motor	0-2 years	In this stage, thinking is based on sensory input and bodily motion.
Pre - operational	2-7 years	Now, children develop symbolic thinking and language.
	2-4 years	Children develop symbolic thinking.
	5-7 years	Children use heuristic language
Concrete operational	7-11 years	Next, children deal with logical process, using the simple forms of classification and with the help of concrete objects
Formal operational	12+ years	Last, children can reason logically and think abstractly

- Identify common relations - young children can identify common properties, or a relationship between two objects which are not identical e.g. chair and table, comb and hair
- Conservation - being able to understand that the quantity or the amount of a certain substance remains the same even if its shape is changed, or if it is transferred from one container to another so long as nothing is added to or subtracted from it. Children below five years usually do not have the ability to conserve.
- Classification or grouping - being able to put an assortment of objects into different groups, sets or classes, based on some property or properties which all the objects in that set have in common e.g. the same colour, the same shape etc. Four to six-year-olds are able to systematically sort and group objects.
- Seriation - the ability to arrange items in an order of increasing or decreasing size. Three to five-year-olds are not able to seriate more than four objects. Seriation fosters the understanding of



the concept of number and helps the child learn the relationships among numbers.

- Cause and effect relationships – conveys an understanding to the children that there is an order in things, that they can act upon objects and make things happen.

Recent research has shown that children can develop these abilities earlier and faster if the tasks are simple, clues are given and all distractions removed. It is also in these years that children learn many new concepts, from everyday happenings and things they see around them. Understanding abstract concepts of number, time, space is difficult for young children and a complete understanding of these concepts develops only during middle childhood years.

In organising play activities to develop these abilities and skills, one must know that some of these activities can be conducted for only one child at a time. Most activities can be carried out either in small groups of three to five children; or in medium size groups, of ten to twelve children. There are also games that can be played by the whole group. Some of these games need no equipment at all, others need a few simple articles. It is worthwhile to make a collection of objects, which can be used for such play activities, especially for children to count, match, classify and arrange. Items such as twigs, shells, sticks, beads, leaves, stones, seeds, and matchboxes can be collected. Other simple things like dominoes, dice and picture cards can easily be made.





Activity No. 1

Objective

To identify little and big objects.

To sort objects by size.

Group Size

Medium

Materials

Several small buttons (all same size) and several big buttons (all same size)

A small box and a big box.

Pairs of objects - one small and one big of each, like boxes, balls, toys, cars, dolls, plastic bottles, buttons.

Preparation

Nil

Attention

Select the boxes and the buttons so that their differences in sizes can readily be seen by children. If children find it difficult to sort into boxes, they can do it on the table at first.

Activity

Spread all the buttons out in front of the children and talk about the sizes of the buttons. Let them identify the small and big buttons by feeling them and picking them up.

Variation I

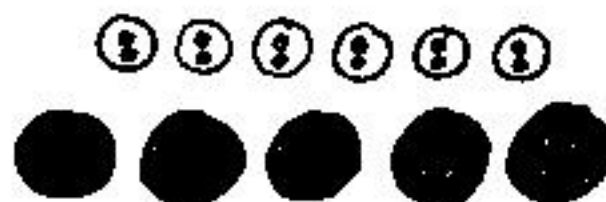
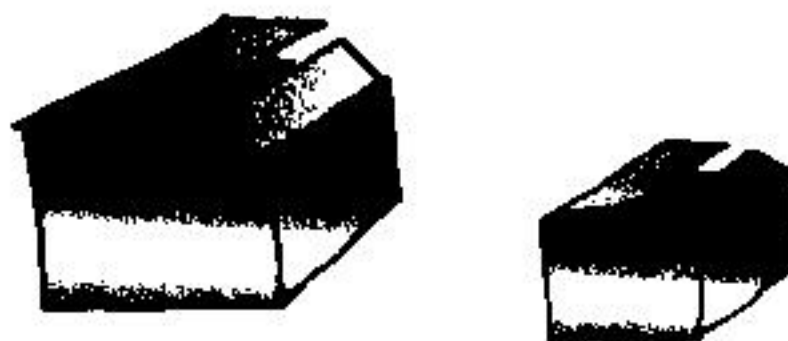
Give two boxes one small and the other big and make children sort the buttons and place them in appropriate boxes. Each child could be given a small and a big box and some buttons so that they sort by themselves.

Variation II

The activity can be repeated with other materials like small/big pebbles, washers, screws, crayons, leaves etc.

Variation III

Ask children to walk around the school indoors and outdoors to collect small and big objects and place them in appropriate boxes.





Activity No. 2

Objective

To acquire problem solving skills

To learn new words.

Group size

Large

Materials

Picture cards of single objects like an elephant, a fan, a chair, a cart, a tree etc.

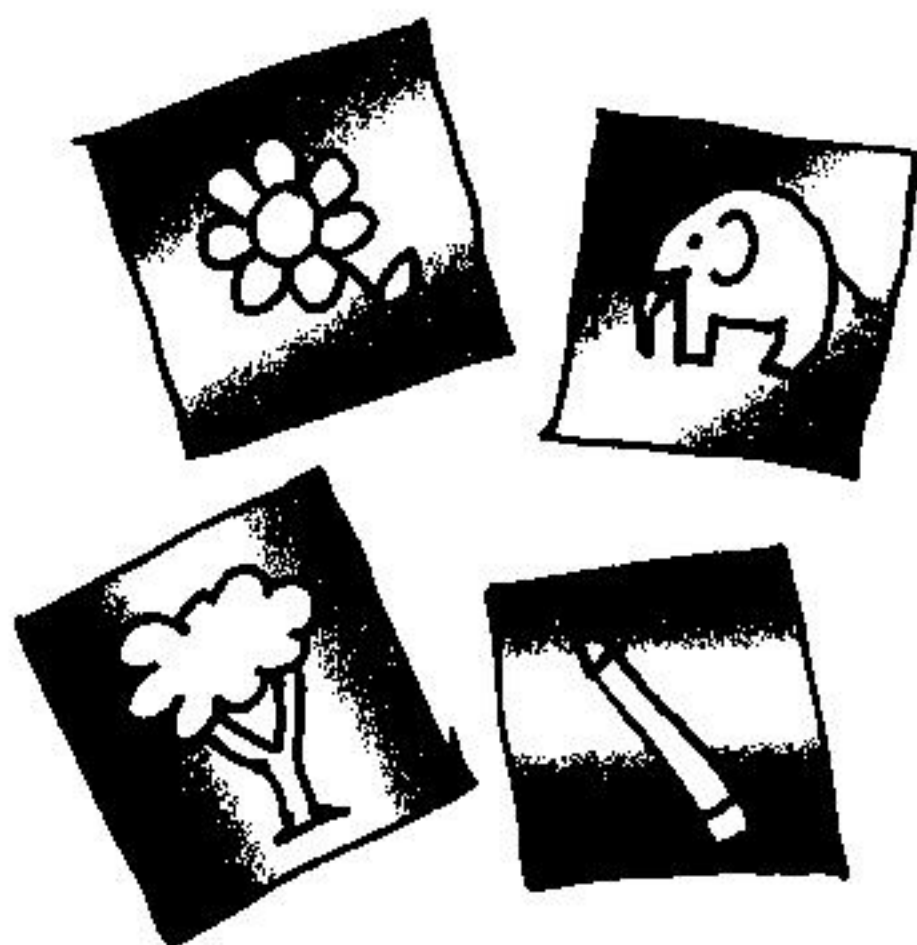
(see Appendix)

Activity

Seat the children in a semicircle. Show the children the picture cards and discuss the specific properties and characteristics of the objects in each picture. e.g. describe the elephant as a large black animal with a trunk. After discussing all the pictures, cover the pictures or keep them face down. Now pick out one of the pictures and without showing to the children describe the picture. The children must guess the picture only with the clues you give them.

Variation

In this game you select a class of objects like food or animals and play it without pictures or objects. Start describing and giving hints about object and let the children guess the object. e.g. food - rice - it is white and when it is cooked it becomes soft, we eat it with curry and curds. Or, bread - it is square, we eat it with jam etc.





Activity No. 3

Objective

To learn to pair objects

To learn new words

To develop memory

Group size

Small

Materials

Pairs of all kinds of picture cards like objects, shapes colours, animals, fruits etc. You will need 24 pairs of cards for a group of four children to play this game. Use old playing cards and paste the pictures on them. Four Bingo boards—each board should be a large cardboard divided into six columns, wide enough to place one card on it.

Activity

Separate the pairs of cards into two packs, each pack having one of the same cards. Make the children sit on the floor in four groups. Distribute one pack, giving six cards and one bingo board to each group. Place the other pack in the centre. The children must arrange their six cards on the Bingo board in front of them. Now pick a card from the pack in the centre and show it to the children. The group who has the pair of that card calls out the name of the object and claims the card. Go on drawing cards from the pack in the centre until all the cards are over and all the Bingo boards in front of each group are complete.



Activity No. 4

Objective

To learn to match numbers.

Group size

Small

Material

Number cards 0 - 10

Domino cards with dots and numbers

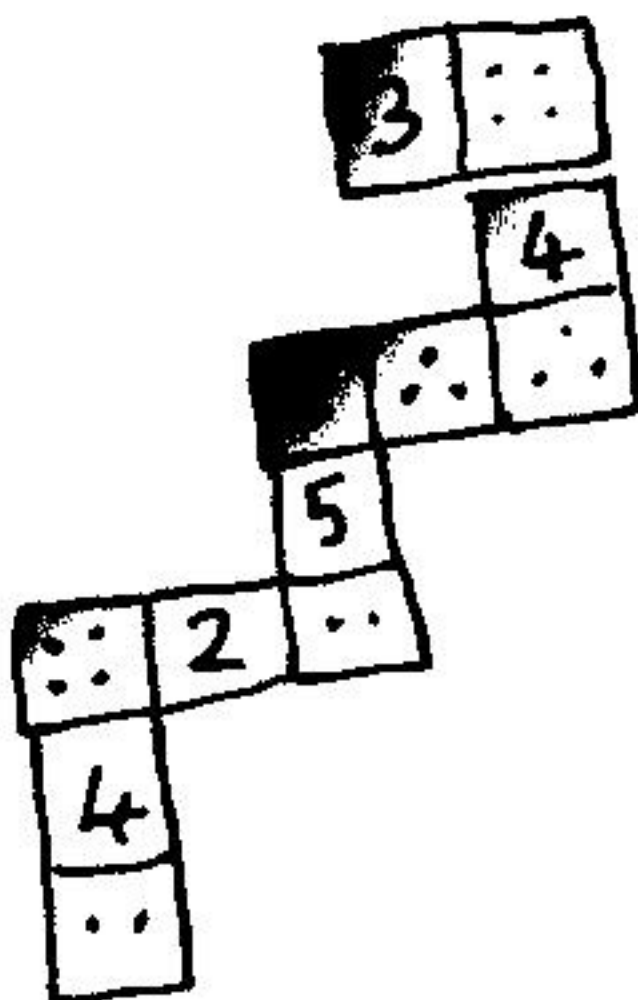
0 - 10 (4 sets)

Preparation

To make domino cards, see Appendix

Attention

Children must be given enough practice. Assist if they still find it difficult. Match boxes, old visiting cards or old playing cards are good alternatives.



Activity

Four children can play this game. Each child gets a set of number cards and domino cards. The children have to match the number cards either with the dots or the numerals on the domino card.

Variation I

Stack the number cards and domino cards separately. Then call out a number. The children must pick out that number card and the matching domino card and place them together. The matching could be with the dots or with the numerals.

Variation II

To be played in small groups. Each child should have a set of 10 domino cards. Put one card on the floor. Ask a child to place the next one on either end of the card to match with the number or the dots on the card. The next child matches the next card. Like this children make a long chain of matching cards. The line can grow at both ends.

Variation III

This could be an individual activity. Let the child arrange all the dominoes in a sequence.



Activity No. 5

Objective

- To learn to pair objects
- To learn the names of related words
- To make decisions

Group size

Large

Materials

Ten pairs of objects or picture cards like lock/key, bat/ball, cup/saucer, needle/thread, shoes/socks, bucket/mug, chalk/slate, pencil/rubber.

Preparation

Nil

Attention

In some cases, several answers could be correct. You may have to explain to the children what exactly is pairing by pairing some cards yourself. If the child makes a mistake, give another try.

Activity

Ask children to sit in a semicircle. Place objects or cards in front of you on the floor. Pick one object. Call out to a child to come and pair the object. e.g. if you show a lock, the child has to say the word 'key' and come and pick up the 'key' card. Let the other children decide whether the answer is correct. Use familiar objects at first, gradually moving to more difficult ones.

Variation

Sit in a circle and discuss a number of related words like cow/calf, pencil/paper. Then form two teams and let them face each other in two rows. Give out pairs of cards, one to the first team and the related card to the other team. The first child from each team calls out a word. The child's partner in the opposite team must give an associated word in reply. Let the children themselves decide if it is correct.



Activity No. 6

Objective

To match objects that are alike

To identify objects that are different

Group size

Medium

Materials

Two small balls, two wooden blocks, two cups and two small toys like cars. Each pair should be identical in size and colour.

Preparation

Put one ball, one car, a block and a cup into the box and keep aside.

Activity

Seat the children in a circle on the floor. Show the ball and talk about it. Roll it up and down from one child to the other. Now do the same with the cup. Bring the box with the other cup, ball and other objects and ask children to look into the box and pick out a cup and ball similar to the one they have. Discuss how objects are similar and also help identify objects that are different e.g. wooden block and a cup.

Variation I

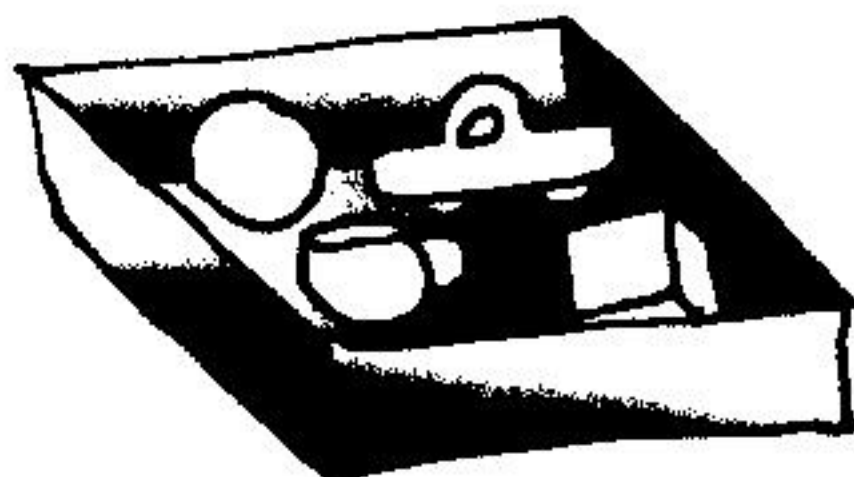
Increase the difficulty of the task by matching paired objects like spoon/fork, cup/saucer, shoes/socks.

Variation II

Play a game by making children find objects in a room which match the picture cards you have – chair, table, book, pen. You could set up objects for matching within the child's line of vision.

Variation III

Ask one child to close her/his eyes and place two objects side by side. The child has to open her/his eyes and say whether the objects are alike or different.





Activity No. 7

Objective

To name pictures of objects that have been removed from view.

To develop memory.

Group size

Medium

Materials

Picture cards of common objects like a foot, a pair of socks, a pair of shoes, an elephant, a chair etc.

Preparation

To make picture cards see Appendix

Activity

Put three pictures on the table show the children the pictures and name the items in them. Make one child shut her/his eyes. Take away one picture, taking care not to shift the other two. Then let the child open her eyes and name the missing picture. Begin with pictures that are very different, like elephant, shoes and car. As the children improve this skill, use pictures that are similar in appearance like three different types of shoes.

Variation I

Play the game but use five pictures and remove two.

Variation II

Let children play the game in pairs or in groups of three or four.

Variation III

Show three to four cards which are in sequence. e.g. a story in four cards. Then remove one and let children guess and describe the missing picture.



Activity No. 8

Objective

To understand and use the words, fast and faster, slow and slower.

To learn that objects move at different speeds

Group size

Large

Materials

Puppets or soft toys of a rabbit and a tortoise. Picture cards of vehicles such as tricycle, car, motorcycle, truck, train, buses etc. To make the puppets, see Appendix.

Preparation

Read the story "The Rabbit and the Tortoise". Repeat the story till the children know the story well.

Activity

Introduce the characters in the story. Make children imitate the movements of a rabbit and the tortoise and move fast and slow across the room. Tell the story using the puppets. Discuss with the children the movement of fast and slow, and faster and slower.

Variation

Place the toys or puppets of the two animals, on the table, a little apart. Say that the rabbit is Mr. Fast and the tortoise is Mr. Slow. Now distribute the picture cards of the vehicles to the children. Let them take turns to place the card either near the rabbit or the tortoise and give reasons for their choice. e.g. Tricycle is placed near the tortoise because it is a slow vehicle and the car is placed near the rabbit because it is a fast moving vehicle.



Activity No. 9

Objective

To increase memory power

To make decisions

Group size

Large

Materials

Small objects like pencil, rubber, chalk, blocks, cup etc., a cloth to cover the objects.

Preparation

Lay out the assortment of articles on a table.

Attention:

Start with just 2 or 3 objects and gradually increase the number to make the activity more challenging.

Activity

Show the children the objects for a few minutes. Then cover the objects with a cloth. Ask one child to guess the number of objects under the cloth. Then the whole group can check the answer. Ask questions about the hidden objects, like which is the biggest? Which is the shortest? What is its colour? And what is its use?

Variation

Display five or six objects on the table and have children name them. Choose one child as the detective and ask her/him to go out. Then remove one of the objects and hide from view. When the detective comes back, give her/him a magnifying glass, and ask her/him to detect the missing object. Continue the activity till all the children have had a chance of being the detective.



Activity No. 10

Objective

To arrange in a sequence

To learn the sequence of numbers

Group size

Medium

Materials

Number cards, 1-10

3 to 5 cards of objects in graded sizes e.g. ducks, balls etc.

To make the cards, see Appendix.

Preparation

Nil

Attention

The cards can be numbered from 1-10 and for older children 1-20

Activity

Seat children in a circle. Give out the cards to be seriated to the children e.g. 3 ducks and ask children to arrange according to the size big, medium and small. Use more than three objects when the children have understood the game.

Variation

Ask the children to sit in a circle. Shuffle the number cards and place them in the centre face down. The first child picks a card, calls out the number and places the card face up. Then the next child picks the next card and places it in sequence. e.g. If the first child has picked the number 3 and the next child has picked 4, then she/he must place the second card next to 3. If it is not in series it should be placed in another line. Then the next child picks a card and tries to place it in sequence. The sequencing can either go forwards or backwards. Continue around the circle till all the children get a chance.



Activity No. 11

Objective

To know the difference between shade and light.

To play together

To follow rules of the game

Group Size

Large

Material

Chalk to draw the shadows.

Preparation

Nil

Activity

Cast your shadow on the ground or on the wall on a sunny day. Try to run away from the shadow. Make children imitate you. Let them understand and find out for themselves that the shadows are always on one side and the light on the opposite side of their body.

Variation I

Make the children stand near a wall on a sunny day where their shadows fall on the wall. Let them stand still and draw the outline of their shadow. Let children make different shapes with their bodies and hands. Ask them to draw the outlines of these too. Let them move and see what happens to the outline.

Variation II

Choose an area during the morning when there is both sunlight and shade in the playground. Select a child as 'it' to catch the other children. When he/she calls out 'shade' the children must run to a shady place. The child who is in the sunlight is out. That child must call out the next 'shade' or 'sunlight' and catch the other children.





Activity No. 12

Objective

To arrange in order of size

To learn to count.

To follow instructions.

Group size

Large

Materials

Small baskets for all the children to collect things from a nature walk. e.g. sticks, stones, leaves.

Preparation

Nil

Attention

Be sure that there are definite differences in the properties of the objects used in the game.

Activity

Take the children out for a nature walk. Ask children to collect a certain number of objects e.g. five dry leaves, six green leaves, three round stones etc. When the children come into the class each child must display the things collected. The rest of the children can count to see if the right number of objects have been collected.

Variation I

From the collection of the nature walk, select three sticks of different lengths, three stones of different sizes, three leaves of different shapes. Ask children to sit in a circle. Call children in turn to arrange these objects in order. e.g. stones from smallest to largest, sticks from shortest to longest, leaves from lightest to darkest and dry to greenest.

Variation II

When the children have mastered how to arrange in order, use more objects like five, six, or seven of the same kind but of varying size, shape or tone of the colour to make the game more challenging



Activity No. 13

Objective

To learn concepts through trees

To appreciate nature

To understand the importance of trees in human life

Group size

Large

Materials

Pencil and paper, basket or box to collect material

Preparation

Display pictures of trees on the display board

Activity

Take children for a nature walk. Show them and name as many trees as you can while you are walking along. Let them make an inventory of the trees that they see. Let them touch the trees and collect materials of the trees, like leaves, barks, twigs, seeds etc. After the walk display the material and talk about it. Some of the questions that you could use for discussion are - "How many trees did you see? What were their shapes? Which two trees were distinctly different in shape? Draw them in your drawing books". Other questions for discussion could be on colour, texture and uses. You must give correct information whenever necessary.

Variation I

Let children draw and paint a mural of trees and display it in the class.

Variation II

Encourage the children to tell stories about trees or teach them a poem about trees.



Activity No. 14

Objective

To understand the concept of floating and sinking

To make judgement

To develop the ability to categorise

Group size

Small

Materials

Small objects of all kinds like blocks of wood, paper clips, cork, paper, stones, keys etc. A small tub or a container for water.

Preparation

Nil

Activity

Give children a tub of water and the objects. Let them drop in the objects one at a time and determine which float and which sink. Lead a discussion on why an object sinks or floats in water.

Variation I

In this game let the children first discuss and guess which are the objects that will float and which will sink. After the discussion, they can put in one object after the other to see if their guess is correct.

Variation II

Draw two circles on the ground and label them as floating and sinking circles. Let the children take turns to put one object at a time into a tub of water to see whether it floats or sinks and place it in the right circle, classifying them as floating or sinking objects.

Variation III

Teach children to make simple paper boats. Ask children to float them in the water. Let them drop small pebbles in to the boat to see the number of pebbles the boat can hold before it sinks.





Activity No. 15

Objectives

To learn to estimate

To develop problem solving skills

To observe the relationship of sizes.

Group size

Small

Materials

Small transparent plastic bottles with a wide mouth, of different sizes. Wooden beads of the same size or other objects like large seeds, marbles, pebbles of the same size can be used.

Preparation

Nil.

Activity

Give each child a plastic bottle and a few beads. Let the children put in the beads to fill the bottle. Then let them take out and count the beads. Let the children discuss who has more beads and who has the bigger bottle and draw their own conclusions.

Variation I

Give a child an empty bottle and let her/him at first guess the number of beads that may fit into the bottle. Then let the child put in the number that was decided and see if the bottle is full. If it is not full she/he can guess how many more beads are required and then put them in. If her/his guess is more than the required beads she/he can count the number of extra beads. Let all the children get turns to put in the beads and also guess the number of beads that their bottles would hold.





Activity No. 16

Objective

To perceive details

To acquire problem solving skills

To manipulate and organise parts of a picture

Group size

Small

Material

Collect large clear coloured pictures from newspapers/ magazines (If possible two identical ones) thick cardboard, and transparent polythene bags to store pieces.

Preparation

Paste the pictures on thick card boards. Then cut the pictures into 3,4 or 5 pieces, to make the puzzles.

Attention

Help the children in the beginning to reason out the position of the pieces of the puzzle.

Activity

Seat the children around a table or on the ground. Give each child a puzzle and help them fit the puzzle, first on top of the identical picture. When the children have mastered this they can fit the puzzle together but using the picture only as a guide. Start with three piece puzzles and then progress to four or more pieces gradually.

Variation I

Children can make their own puzzles. Give a large picture to colour or paint. These pictures can be mounted on cardboard. Then cut into pieces to form a puzzle.

Variation II

Use other materials and pictures to make different types of puzzles.

- Use rough and smooth surfaces, like sand paper and marble papers.
- Large photographs
- Old calendar pictures



Activity No. 17

Objective

To identify the missing body parts in a picture

To draw a simple human figure

Group size

Large

Materials

Blackboard and chalk, paper and crayons

Preparation

Make a worksheet for each child. Draw a line in the middle of the paper. Draw half of a man as shown in the illustration

Attention

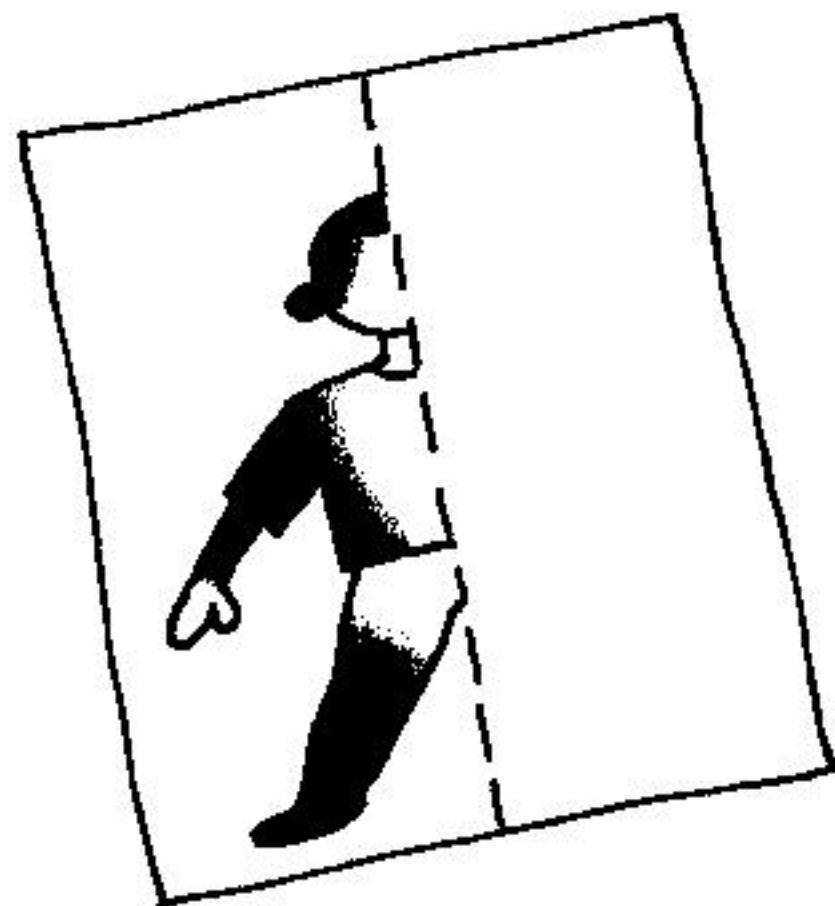
Accuracy of the drawing is not as important as the child's ability to visually place the missing half of the body

Activity

Draw a line in the middle of a blackboard. Draw one half of a person as shown in the illustration. Ask children to watch while you draw the other half, naming the parts as you draw in the missing parts. You could also call children to fill in the missing parts.

Variation

Distribute the worksheets and crayons to the children. Let children complete their picture and colour them.





Activity No. 18

Objective

- To reproduce patterns
- To form geometrical shapes
- To develop visual perception

Group size

Small

Materials

Chart paper, sketch pens or paints

Preparation

Cut chart paper into large squares 15 x 15 cms. and small squares 5 x 5 cms. Colour them as follows - make 10 blank, 10 fully coloured, and 10 half coloured.

Activity

Give children the large squares (15 x 15 cms.). Make them create designs on the floor by placing them in different ways.

Variation I

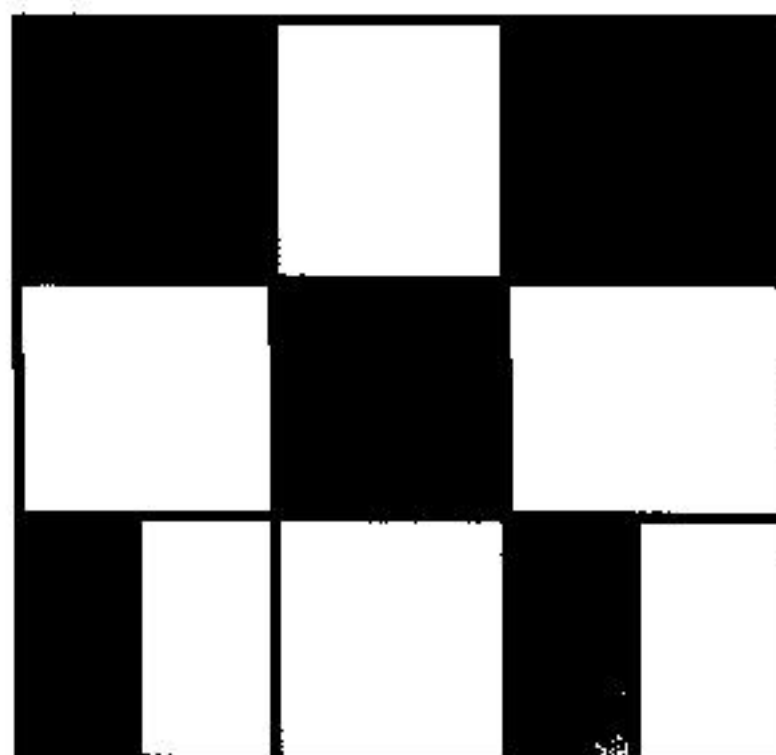
Suggest some designs by illustrating on the black board, felt board or the design itself. Give children the squares and let them copy your design.

Variation II

Encourage children to make geometrical shapes with the squares. Let them try to make squares, rectangles and crosses.

Variation III

Size concepts can be taught using the squares. Let children make a large square out of 4 small squares, or cover a large square with nine of the small squares.





Activity No. 19

Objectives

To learn to categories

To take decisions

Group size

Large

Materials

Nil

Preparation

Nil

Activity

Make children sit in a circle.

Call out directions such as,

"All those who are wearing something red stand up."

"All the girls stand up."

"Those who washed their hands clap." The children must decide for themselves to do the action. Those who act at the wrong time sit down and watch.

Variation I

Sing the song

"What are you wearing today?"

What are you wearing?

What are you wearing?

What are you wearing today?

If you are wearing red stand up

If you are wearing red turn around

If you are wearing red take a bow

If you are wearing red sit down.

(sing the song for other colours the children are wearing).

Variation II

Play the same game with tall and short children or with girls and boys.

Activity No. 20

Objective

To identify the parts of the body and their functions

To understand the five senses

To develop artistic abilities

Group size

Small

Material

Small paper bags for each child, coloured paper, chart paper, crayons, scissors, paste or gum

Preparation

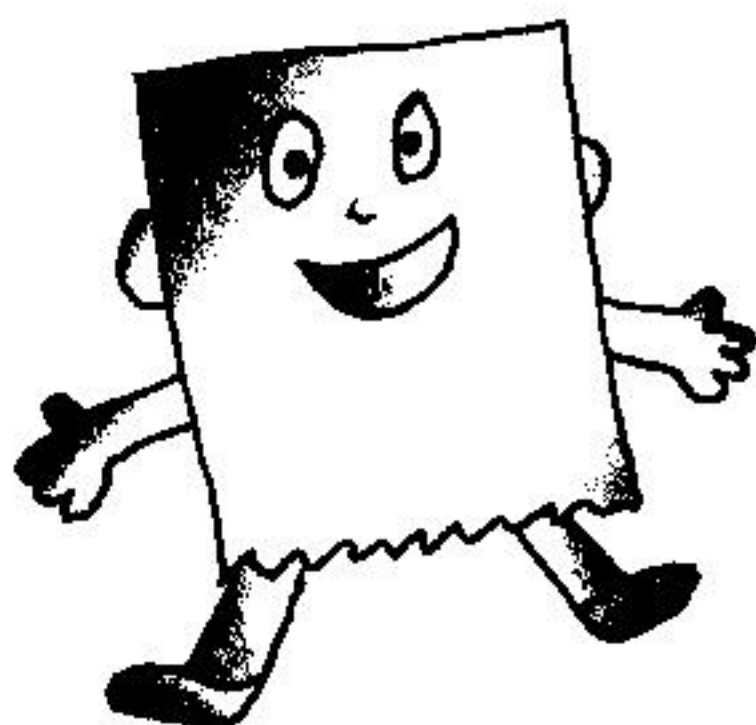
Nil

Activity

Begin by reviewing the five senses with the children. Then tell the children that they are going to make puppets that can do all these things. Distribute the material and do the activity step by step together. Ask the question, "If you want your puppet to see, what must you give it?" After the children answer, give them paper to cut out eyes and help to paste them on the paper bag. In the same way, ask questions about hearing, tasting, smelling and feeling, and help the children to cut out and paste ears, mouth, nose, hands and legs on the paper bag. When the whole puppet is assembled discuss each part of the body. See that each child's puppet is different. Let children colour or decorate their puppets in their own way.

Variation

Help children put up a puppet show using the puppets they have made. They may act out a story or a rhyme about the five senses.



Language development begins at birth and grows with amazing speed and complexity. In all cultures, the infant who communicates only through cries at birth learns in about three years to use her/his first language for several purposes.

Levels of language

There are two levels of language - **comprehension** or receptive use, related to listening and reading and **production** or expressive use related to speaking and writing. The former is always ahead of the latter. A one year old speaking his/her first word may understand 20-50 words, a two year old with an 'active' vocabulary of hundred words may understand five or six hundred, while a 3 year old may have a command of a 1000 words in the first language.

Both levels develop from birth. The new born, exposed to different sounds from birth seems to prefer the human voice, and goes from recognising the mother's voice in a few days to discriminating sounds at one month and associating sounds (and tones of voice) with meaning by three months. He/she then begins to understand simple utterances and responds by various actions.

Production of sounds progresses from the newborn's rhythmic cry to diverse kinds of cries and sounds from cooing (2-3 months) to gurgling and babbling (pre - speech sounds) from 6 to 9 months.

Communication through a combination of verbal and non-verbal means enables a child to carry on a 'conversation' or 'dialogue' long before, he/she can speak. This 'proto-language' is a combination of gestures, movements, smiles, facial expressions, sounds, introductions and actions.

At one year, the child uses the single word sentence to name, question, command, greet or express a need or feeling. In the second year two-word (later three - word) sentences are used to relate events, express relations, name and label and express feelings. In the third year, the child learns different structures, combines words by using grammatical rules, links sentences, uses connecting words and question words and begins to use the past and future tense.



Functions of Language

Language development cannot be measured only by the growth of vocabulary, especially as children know many more words than they use. It is more important to see whether children are growing in their ability to use language in more and more complex, expressive and meaningful ways to perform various functions.

What are these basic functions?

- instrumental (to get what you want / need)
- regulatory (to command or alter other's behaviour)
- personal (to express feelings / thoughts)
- interpersonal (to relate to others)
- heuristic (to explore and learn)
- imaginative (to explore alternatives beyond the here and now)
- informative (to convey information)

By three, the child can perform the first six and between three and five learns to do so more thoroughly and skillfully and also to do the seventh.

As 3 – 5 year olds grow in skills, they should be able to do some of the following language functions (Box 4) with fluency, clarity, richness and accuracy and effectively communicate meaning.

Box: 4

listen / describe things	ask questions	follow instructions
give directions	express feelings, wants and needs	communicate ideas
imagine possibilities	discriminate and play with sounds	comprehend longer and more complex utterances
narrate events in sequence	use words correctly	pronounce clearly



Children are growing in their ability to use language in more and more complex, expressive and meaningful ways





**Practice in
language,
like: talking
and listening
- singing
songs and
rhymes -
stories -
playing with
puppets - free
conversation -
picture
reading
dramatic and
role play and
others**

How a child learns language

The child learns language by:

- listening
- imitation
- repetition and practice of conversation
- appreciation and encouragement by others

So what can you do to assist the child to learn?

Listening

Children should be given frequent opportunities to hear language. Teachers must be a model of good, proper and clear speech. Talking to the children frequently, individually and in groups, about everyday matters and experiences will enrich their language and encourage them to listen.

Speaking

Do not expect children to sit quietly or be silent for long periods. They need opportunity to speak. They should be allowed to talk to each other as they play. Encourage them to talk and ask questions. Some time should be set aside every day for free conversation. Use of 'first' language will help children gain confidence.

Encouragement

Every child deserves freedom to express himself or herself. Praise and encouragement at their effort will go a long way in helping them to be effective communicators.

Many activities can be planned to give children practice in language, like: talking and listening - singing songs and rhymes - stories - playing with puppets - free conversation - picture reading dramatic and role play and others. As children approach six years, some special activities to help read and write can be introduced.





Activity No. 1

Objective

To learn to listen.

To find meanings.

Group size

Large

Materials

A small object like a block to hide

Preparation

Nil.

Activity

Send one child out of the room. The rest of the children hide an object in some part of the room. When the child comes back, the only clue they must give is, "hot" - to show that the child is close to the object and "cold" - to show far. They can also show how near or how far by saying - hot, hotter, hottest or cold, colder, coldest. The children can help the child to move in the right direction. When the child finds the object, another child goes out and the group hides the object again in another place.

Variation

One child goes out of the room and the rest of the children hide an object somewhere in the room. Then the child is called back. The other children must give clues about where the object is hidden e.g. it is inside something brown, near the door etc., but should try not to look in the direction where the object is hidden. Continue until the object is found. Try to gradually reduce the number of clues. The objects to be hidden can be changed.



Activity No. 2

Objective

To develop vocabulary and communication skills.

To guess by feeling and touch and name objects

Group size

Medium

Materials

A collection of small familiar objects. e.g. teaspoon, chalk, key, bangle, ball, cup or natural objects like leaves, twigs shells, seeds, feathers and stones. A cardboard box or a cloth bag.

Preparation

To make feely box - Take a cardboard box (shoebox). Seal all the sides and cut a hole on one side big enough for a hand to go in. Decorate the box with coloured paper. Put the objects you have collected into the box.

Attention

Give only a few familiar objects at the beginning. Add more objects in stages to make the activity more challenging. Let there be no objects that are sharp that may hurt the children's hands.

Activity

Ask a child to put her/his hand into the box (feely box or magic bag) and feel an object, identify and call out the name. Then let her/him take the object out and show to all the children. Let each child take a turn.

Variation I

Ask the children to take turns to put their hands inside the box/bag, feel an object and name it, then describe it as smooth or rough, hard or soft, heavy or light.

Variation II

Play the game using only fruits or vegetables. Let the children name them as they feel and pickup.

Variation III

Play the same game, but this time, the child instead of naming the object should describe the object so that the other children can guess what it is. e.g. if the child feels a ball she can say - "it is smooth and round and we play with it".



WHO'S THERE?

Activity No. 3

Objective

To identify voices.

To listen carefully.

Group size

Large

Materials

Nil

Preparation

Nil.

Activity

To start the game each child has to speak briefly and every one must listen carefully to his/her voice. Let one child be the 'magician', and stand in front of the class with his/her back to the rest of the children. Let another child be the 'visitor'. The 'visitor' taps the floor behind the 'magician' who asks, "Who is there?" The 'visitor' has to reply, "It's me, open up". The 'magician' can take three chances to guess the name of the 'visitor'. If the guess is right, the 'visitor' goes back to his/her seat and another child comes as the 'visitor'. If the 'magician' fails to guess in three chances, he/she sits out and the 'visitor' becomes the 'magician'. To add some mystery to the game, the 'magician' can chant some magic words that the children make up, with your help.

Variation

Instead of speaking, the 'visitor' can sing a song and the 'magician' can guess who it is.





Activity No. 4

Objective

To encourage children to talk

To share things of interest

To enlarge vocabulary

Group size

Large

Materials

Make children bring from home objects of interest or you provide them with some e.g. a toy, a rock, a shell, a feather etc.

Preparation

Nil

Attention

Time must be kept aside every day for children to share their experiences.

Activity

Seat the children in a circle. Let one child stand and show his/her object and talk about it. Encourage the children to talk by asking open-ended questions. Continue the game till all the children have had a turn.

Variation I

Display all the objects the children have brought. Label the objects and let the children talk about the objects.

Variation II

Bring a surprise object (object in a bag) and share with the children. Let the children hide the object behind their backs while describing it to the other children, and let the others guess and name the object.



Activity No. 5

Objective

To increase vocabulary

To discriminate sounds in a language

Group size

Medium

Materials

Nil.

Preparation

Nil.

Activity

Seat the children in a circle. Give a number of examples of rhyming words. e.g. ball/doll, cat/bat etc. Start the game by calling out a word. The child next to you must call out a word rhyming with yours e.g. when you say 'cat' the child next to you will say 'bat' or 'rat'. This round can continue till the children have exhausted all the words that they know rhyme with 'cat'. Then begin the next round with another word. Initially you could allow the children to use nonsense words that rhyme, but after a few times of playing the game, children should be encouraged to use only meaningful rhyming words.



Activity No. 6

Objective

- To listen and repeat words
- To increase vocabulary
- To improve memory power
- To understand categories

Group size

Large

Preparation

Nil

Activity

Let the children sit in a circle. You begin the game by saying a word. The child sitting next to you must repeat your word and add one of his/her own e.g. You say – boy, the child next to you says – boy, girl. The next child says – boy, girl, chair and so on. Continue for a five to six word chain. Then start a fresh round.

Variation I

Start this time by saying "I am packing my bag and I need your help. I will put in a skirt, what will you put in?"

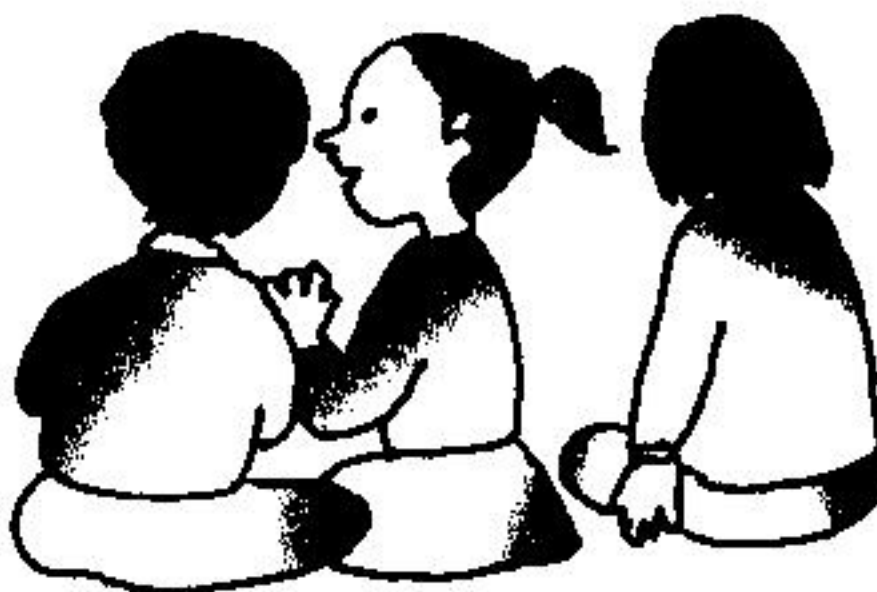
The child next to you will say, "I will put in a skirt and a blouse." Each child in turn will repeat what is already packed and add one more item. Continue as long as the children can.

Variation II

Only theme words are allowed. Start the game like this, "I went to the zoo. I saw a tiger". The child next to you must say, "I went to the zoo. I saw a tiger, and an elephant", and so on.

Variation III

With older children, play with short sentences and compose a story.



**Activity No. 7****Objective**

To develop listening skills

To follow directions

To be alert

Group size

Large

Materials

Nil

Preparation

Nil

Activity

Make the children sit or stand in a circle around you. Give directions for two or three different actions, which have to be done in the same sequence as you have called out. e.g. first touch your toes, then put your hands on your hip and then jump three times. Begin with two directions and later make it difficult by adding more directions.

Variation

The children stand in a semicircle. You call out a few directions e.g. jump, clap, and bend, touch your toes, close your eyes. The children must carry out the directions only if these are preceded by "Rabbit says". If you do not say "Rabbit says" then the children must not do the action. Now start giving directions, sometimes with "Rabbit says" and sometimes without it. Do this quickly. Those who do the action incorrectly, must sit down and watch. The children can be made to give directions in turns. 'Rabbit' can be replaced with names of other animals or children in the class.

LEFT AND RIGHT



Activity No. 8

Objective

To know which is right and left.

To learn the names of parts of the body.

Group size

Large group.

Material

Nil

Preparation

Nil.

Activity

Show children how to make a movement e.g. put right foot or left foot forward, or raise right or left arm. After the children have learnt to do the actions, call out at random 'right' and 'left'. The children must follow the instructions. If a child makes a mistake, she/he must sit out and watch. Continue the game as long as the children can.

Variation

Let the children form a circle and sing the song 'Bogey Bogey' doing the actions with the words.

I put my right hand in
(pull right hand in)
I put my right hand out
(stretch right hand out)
I put my right hand in
(pull right hand in)
And shake it all about
(shake hand)
Do the bogey, bogey
(shake the whole body)
Turn around
(turn one round)
That's what its all about
(bend forward and bring hands
palm open to the front)
Repeat with left hand, right
foot, left foot, and whole self.
Oh the bogey bogey (3 times)
(wave hands over the head)
That's what its all about.
(The same action as before).



**Activity No. 9****Objective**

To increase vocabulary.

To increase memory

To listen carefully

To learn categories

Group size

Medium

Material

Nil

Preparation

Nil.

Activity

Let children form a circle.

Decide on the name of class or family. e.g. fruit, red objects, food, animals etc., Tell the children what you have chosen e.g. fruits. Ask each child in turn to call out the name of a fruit.

After some practice, children should not repeat the name of a fruit already called out. Change the 'family' after a few rounds.

Variation I

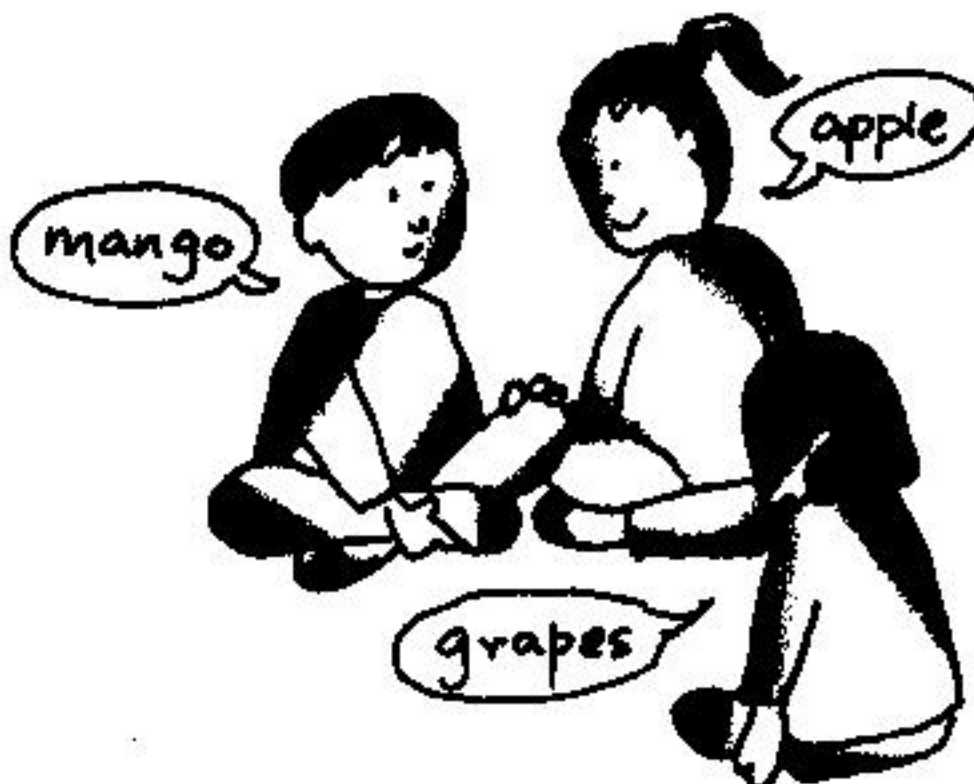
The same game can be played in groups of 4 or 5 children. The team leader will call out the name of the family.

Variation II

Words starting with the same sound are the 'family'. e.g. if you take the sound 'm', only words starting with 'm' should be called out. Begin the game by talking about words that start with the letter 'm'

Variation III

Decide on a certain family e.g. animals. Discuss the words, showing what makes them a family. Call out family words, then one that is not in the family. e.g. you say lion, tiger, monkey and chair. When 'chair' is called out the children must clap to catch the 'outsider'.





Activity No. 10

Objective

To be alert and attentive to language

To experience a sense of achievement and confidence.

Group size

Large group

Material

Nil

Preparation:

Nil

Attention:

Play the game a few times for practice

Activity

Ask children to form a circle. You stand in the middle and do a simple action; but while you are doing the action, describe a different action. e.g. while you say "I am bending down" - you actually wave your hands over your head. The child must do what you say and not what you do. The children who do what you are doing are out and sit out of the game. Carry on with the game until only one child is left. Let children take turns to be the leader.

Variation

In this game you call out actions like 'fly birdie fly', and all the children move their arms in a flying motion. Keep repeating these words and suddenly change the word to something that does not fly e.g. 'fly horse fly'. Then the children must stand still. Give instructions fast as the game continues and ask children who make mistakes to sit and watch others.





Activity No. 11

Objective

To follow clues

To increase curiosity

To listen carefully

To solve problems

Group size

Large

Materials

Pictures of objects or animals or birds that are familiar to children. Safety pins

Preparation

Nil.

Activity

An object or an animal picture is pinned on to the back of each child. The children must go around asking questions to find out about the picture that is pinned on their backs, e.g. They can ask questions such as, "Am I an animal?" Am I big or small? What is my colour?" etc. Clues can be given until the child can name the picture on his/her back. Give enough time so that all the children find what is on their back.

Variation

As in the first game, pin pictures on the backs of the children. In this game the children have to frame questions that only answer to a "Yes" or a "No".
e.g. "Am I an object?" "No".
"Am I an animal?" "Yes".
"Am I black?" "Yes".
"Am I small?" "No".
"Do I have a trunk?" "Yes".
"Am I an elephant?" "Yes".
Let the game go on till all the children find out who they are.





Activity No. 12

Objective

To follow clues

To express themselves in a few sentences.

Group size

Large

Materials

A few common objects

Preparation

Nil

Attention

Your clues must be clear and said slowly with a pause between each clue.

Activity

Seat the children in a circle and choose one of the children as the detective. Describe one of the children in the group to the detective. The detective must find out whom you are describing. e.g. "I am thinking of a girl in a red dress, wearing a yellow hair clip. She is wearing a bangle too". Keep giving clues until the detective finds out the child you are describing. Repeat with other children.

Variation I

Seat the children in a circle on the floor. Make one child go out of the room. Make another child to hide in the room. Call back the first child into the room. The child must look around the circle and name the missing child. Repeat the activity till as many children as possible have had turns at guessing.

Variation II

To make the game more challenging, have the children change positions in the circle.



Activity No. 13

Objective

To learn to reason.

To be observant.

To introduce comparisons.

Group size

Large

Materials

Nil

Preparation

Nil

Attention

Help children make riddles by giving them many clues.

Activity

Seat children in a semi-circle. Ask the children these riddles.

"What is round and gives light,

Like the moon in the night".

"What is green like grass,
But grows on trees"

"What is white like sugar,
but does not taste sweet".

Give children time to guess. You can make more riddles of your own.

Variation

After the children are familiar with the game, divide them into two teams. Let one team ask a riddle which they have made up and the other team give the answer. Scores can be kept.



Activity No. 14

Objective

To increase vocabulary

To enable children to speak in structured sentences

To use observation and memory

Group size

Medium

Materials

Picture charts

Preparation

Nil

Attention

You can use stick figures to draw your pictures.

Activity

Make children sit in a semi circle. Fix a picture on a display board close to you so that all the children can see the picture. Show the picture to the children and ask questions related to the picture. Encourage children to talk. You could make each child say one or two sentences about the picture.

Variation

Draw a picture on the board. Ask questions related to the picture. Add details as the children give suggestions. e.g. a road scene. You may have drawn only a few vehicles and the children may suggest more. Write the sentences or the words that were discussed on the blackboard. Read them aloud after the discussion.



Activity No. 15

Objective

To improve listening and speaking skills

To stimulate imagination and thinking

To increase vocabulary

Group size

Large

Materials

Story book, flash cards, flannel board, cut outs, and puppets

To learn about puppets, see Appendix

Preparation

Nil

Attention

Story telling does not need aids,, if you can do it with expression, voice modulation body movement and gestures.

Activity

Seat children comfortably around you so that they can see you and the teaching aids clearly. Tell them short stories using simple language. Modulate your voice carefully, use lots of gestures and vary your facial expression. Select stories for children's participation, which have lots of repetitive words, sounds and actions, or jingles. After narrating the story, help children recall the story by asking questions.

Variation I

After the children are familiar with the story, give them simple props like masks, sticks, shawls etc. Let children select characters in the story and dramatise the story. All the children can be given some role.

Variation II

Choose a story, and retell it as an introduction for the game. Now divide the children into groups and allot a character to each group. Tell the story slowly and let each group act out its part with sounds, words and movements. Use songs when- ever possible.



Activity No. 16

Objective

To develop good speech habits.

To express in words

To release emotions and to develop coordinated movement

Group size

Large

Materials

Big paper cutouts which can be held by the children with both hands.

Three common objects or pictures as different as possible e.g. a tree, a pot, a comb.

Preparation

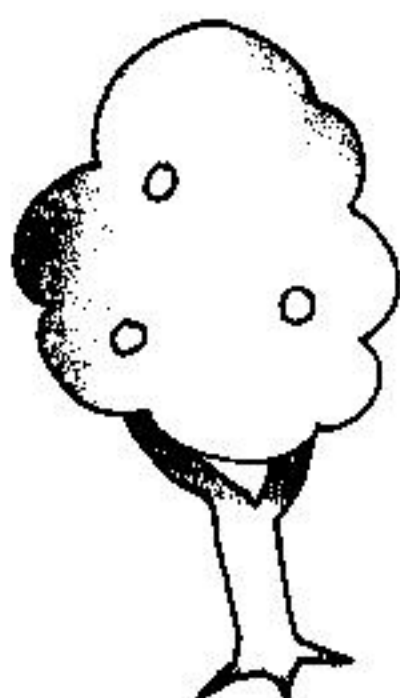
To make the paper cutouts, see Appendix

Activity

Seat the children in a semi-circle. Tell them a story and ask them to enact it. Give turns to children to act and let the rest of the class be the audience. Tell the audience that they must sit, listen and watch the play. Before starting, review the play with the actors giving suggestions on what to do and say. Give them a chance to use their imagination and create their own dialogues. Let them help you make the masks/cut-outs and other props for the story.

Variation

Make children sit far apart and at random. Keep a few things or pictures in the middle. Pick up one of them and make up a story. e.g. if you pick up the tree say, 'In a jungle there was a big tree'. The children must act like a tree with suitable movements and sounds. Continue the story adding objects as you go on and let the children help to add to the story and to act it out.





Activity No. 17

Objective

To stimulate imagination

To make up stories

To suggest possible endings

Group size

Large

Materials

Flash cards of pictures of a story.

Glove puppet (see Appendix)

Preparation

Nil.

Activity

Seat children in a semi-circle, show a picture and begin a story. e.g. "Once upon a time there was a forest with many animals.....". Then make children continue the story using their own imagination and sentences. Let children take turns to finish the story. When one story finishes, you could start another story. Let all the children have a turn to express themselves.

Variation

In this activity you begin a story with a sentence which invites a continuation. Then each child in turn adds one of his own. You can use a doll, a toy, a mask or a puppet to get them started. Let them continue until someone brings the story to an end.





Activity No. 18

Objective

To learn to mime a familiar activity, like a ride on a bus

To stimulate imagination

To select correct vocabulary

Group size

Medium

Materials

A chair for each child

A cap for the driver and a bag for the conductor

Paper to make tickets and cardboard to make coins

Preparation

Arrange the chairs in two rows like seats in a bus. Place one chair in the front for the driver. Make some tickets and coins from paper and cardboard.

Activity

Gather the children informally in a semicircle and discuss the activity "a ride in a bus".

Discuss the different roles and what happens on a trip in a bus. After the discussion say, "Today we are going to take a pretend bus ride. Where would you like to go".

Then make one child the driver, another the conductor and the rest the passengers. Imitate the actions like getting into the bus, sitting down, buying a ticket and looking out of the window. After a short "trip" you could have a discussion on what they saw. The bus could stop at bus stops.

Variation I

You can also have a trip on a train, an aeroplane, or a ferryboat in the same way.

Variation II

Take children for a real bus ride. After they return to the class, "act out" the ride. Discuss the safety rules of a bus ride.



Activity No. 19

Objective

To build a large vocabulary

To use finger and hand movements

To coordinate speech and movement

Group size

Large

Materials

Finger puppets of birds. (see Appendix)

Preparation

Practise and memorise finger play rhymes and songs before hand. The songs must have plenty of finger and hand movement

Attention

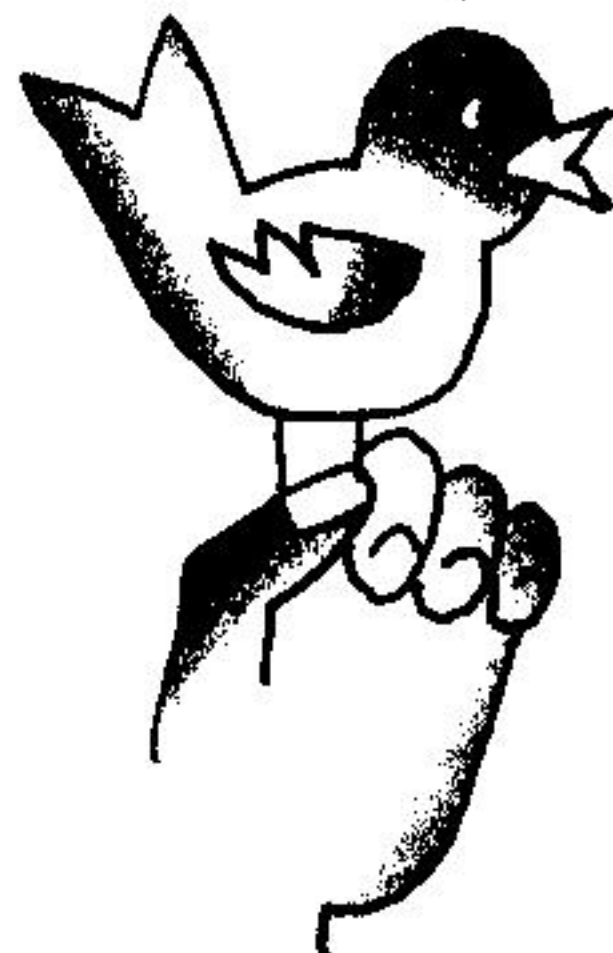
Do the finger play enthusiastically focussing on the fun. Some children will just watch and will join only when they are ready. Each child learns at her own pace. You can sing songs in any language.

Activity

Seat the children in a circle. Sing a song and ask the children to sing with you with actions. Always sing the song as a whole, doing the actions with the children. Repeat the song every day till the children have learnt it.

Variation

Use finger or glove puppets when you sing the songs.





Activity No. 20

Objective

- To expand vocabulary
- To express ideas and feelings through movement of the body.
- To learn concepts like up and down, left and right.

Group size

Large

Material

A whistle and instruments for rhythm.

Preparation

Nil.

Activity

Make children stand far apart spread all over the room or playground. Call out different movements like "stretch as tall as you can, crawl on all fours, roll on the ground, swing your body from side to side, move your left foot from left to right" The children have to move doing the action called out. Play an instrument for rhythm and blow a whistle or clap your hands to change the action. Vary your commands so that children learn new concepts, e.g. up down, left-right, fast-slow, heavy-light, loud-soft, strong-weak, over-under. Have a lot of variety, e.g. follow a fast movement with a slow one, a stretching movement with a bending one and so on.

Variation I

Call out definite shapes that they must make with their bodies, like "Roll like a ball, spread like a tree, be straight like a pole, sharp like a rock, pointed like a mountain".

Variation II

Ask two or three children to join together and form a shape, like an arch, a letter of the alphabet, or an animal.

Social and personal development includes the development of good habits and behaviour, the right attitudes and sound values. Social development refers to relations with others, learning how to get along with others, learning to help, cooperate and live together, to lead and to follow, and learning socially acceptable habits and the rules of behaviour etc. while personal development refers to the growth of self-awareness, self-reliance, self-control and self-confidence in the child.

During this period, children adopt habits, attitudes, behavioural patterns and values from their environment and that is why it is important to teach them good habits and healthy attitudes.

The typical social growth of most children goes through the following phases, and can be observed in their patterns of play.

Stages of social play

Solitary play (0-2 years) At this stage children play on their own. They enjoy play with an adult or older child but cannot interact much with peers.

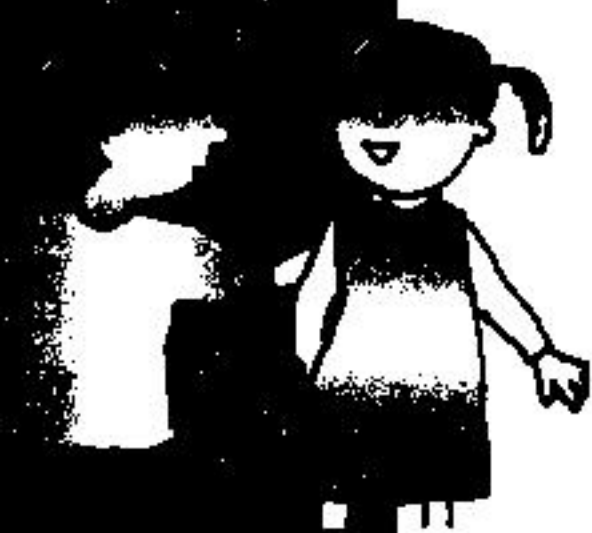
Parallel play (2+) Children begin to sit beside another child of the same age, playing separately but with occasional interaction.

Associative play (3+) Now children show an interest in peers and want to play with others, with just two or three children. This is the time for small group activities which teach children to learn to play together, and follow teacher-guided group play.

Group play (4+) Now children readily participate and co-operate in activities involving five to eight children in a group. They are also ready to manage and handle group play independently.

Games with rules (6+) By now children are able to understand rules and play elaborate games with rules. Competitive and team games can come only after this stage is reached. All the earlier types of play can continue indefinitely as the child grows up. i.e. children will go on doing as they did in earlier stages.

Therefore the play activities introduced for children should also follow this gradation. At first, simple activities for a few children and later in groups gradually moving on to team games at 5+.





Stages of personal development

The stages in personal development or development of the self can be seen from various angles, like

- self-awareness in the domain of thinking
- self-reliance in the domain of habits, actions, skills
- self-confidence and
- self-control in the domain of feelings and emotions

In infancy, the child who is at first unable to perceive any difference between herself/himself and others, gradually comes to differentiate herself/himself from others. By the age of three the child is aware of himself / herself as a person, uses the word "my", identifies by name, is possessive about things, is aware of others and comes into conflict with them. Fantasy and imaginative play is the vehicle for learning about oneself, others and the world. The child grows in self-awareness through simple imitative actions, doll play, various 'pretend' games, role-playing, dramatisation and play with imaginary companions. At the same time, the child now feels a need to belong and to learn the rules of social behaviour. This is done through games and through group play and role-play.

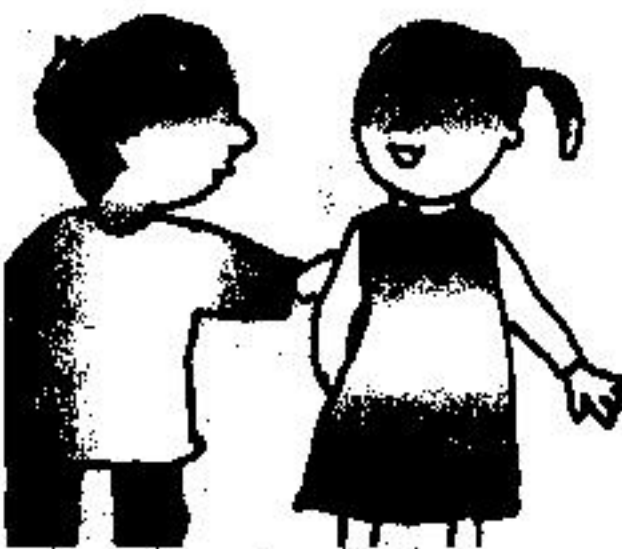
Self-reliance starts with simple activities of self-care and control over bodily functions, and is related to the development of motor skills as well as health and social habits. Self-expression develops through language, creative activities and non-verbal communication. Self-control forms the third side of the triangle in the personal development in a child who gradually learns to integrate all these functions.

Activities to promote these aspects : self-awareness, self-reliance, self control, and self-expression will be found scattered in all the chapters in this book. In this section the emphasis will be on pro-social behaviour.

Rewards

The best reward for a young child is approval, praise, encouragement and love. This can be shown in many ways.

**The best
reward for a
young child
is approval,
praise,
encouragement
and love**



Achievement can be recognised by:

- a look
- a smile
- a nod
- a pat
- a few words
- telling other children about it
- informing the parents about it.

Remember:

Do NOT praise the same children all the time.

Do NOT draw comparisons between children.

Do NOT offer bribes such as sweets.

Do NOT make promises that you cannot keep.

Punishments

The most humiliating punishment is disapproval or reprimand or lack of love. This too can be shown in many ways. But punishment must be determined by the age of the child. A young child cannot always understand our reasons for punishment, so the same mistake committed by children of different ages must be treated differently.

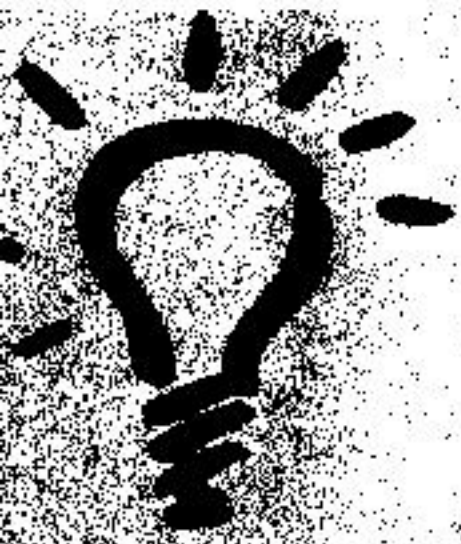
A three-year old should not be punished, but one should try to *prevent or avoid* the wrongdoing. If this cannot be prevented, activity should be changed quickly.

For a four-year old, the wrong action can be stopped and disapproval shown.

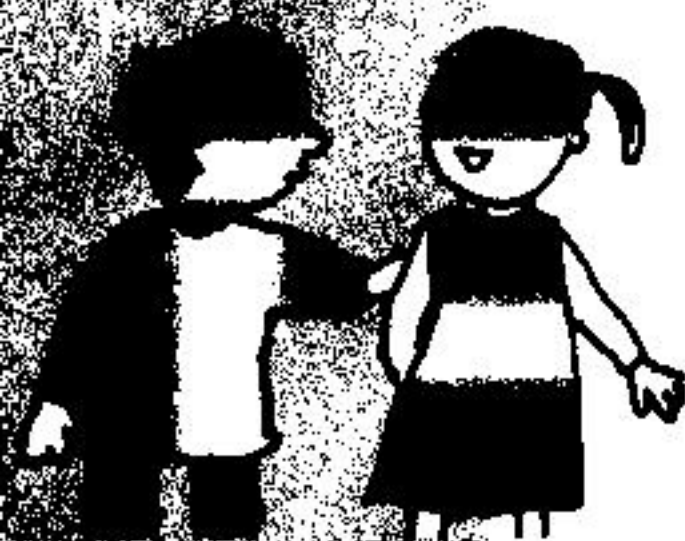
Children of five and above, can take disapproval and the explanation of the reason for it.

Disapproval can be shown by:

- facial expression
- a few firm words
- a sign of hands



Remember:
not to praise
the same
children all
the time
not to draw
comparisons
between
children
not to offer
bribes such
as sweets
not to make
promises that
you cannot
keep



**Remember:**

Do NOT
strike or hit
or slap a
child

Do NOT
shame a
child in front
of others

Do NOT
complain to
parents
about the
child's
behaviour.

- tone of voice
- a shake of head

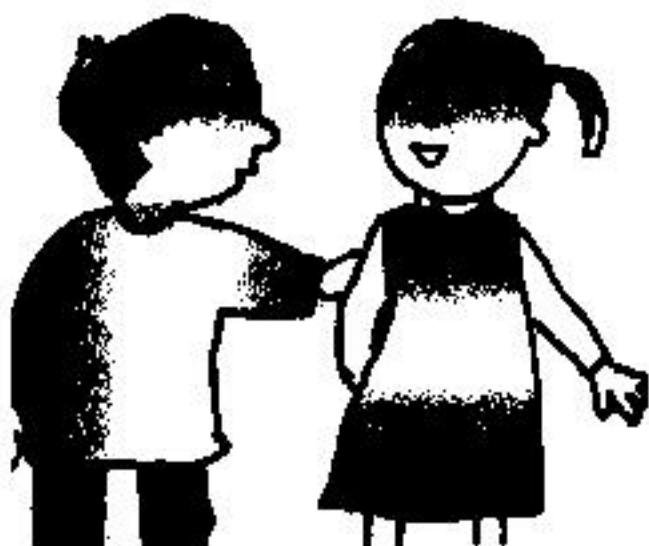
If this does not bring the desired results, simple, quick and short punishment can be used.

Remember:

Do NOT strike or hit or slap a child.

Do NOT shame a child in front of others.

Do NOT complain to parents about the child's behaviour.





Activity No. 1

Objective

To understand one's feelings when someone copies.

To imitate

Group size

Medium

Materials

Blocks (4 blocks for each child)

Cat mask see Appendix

Preparation

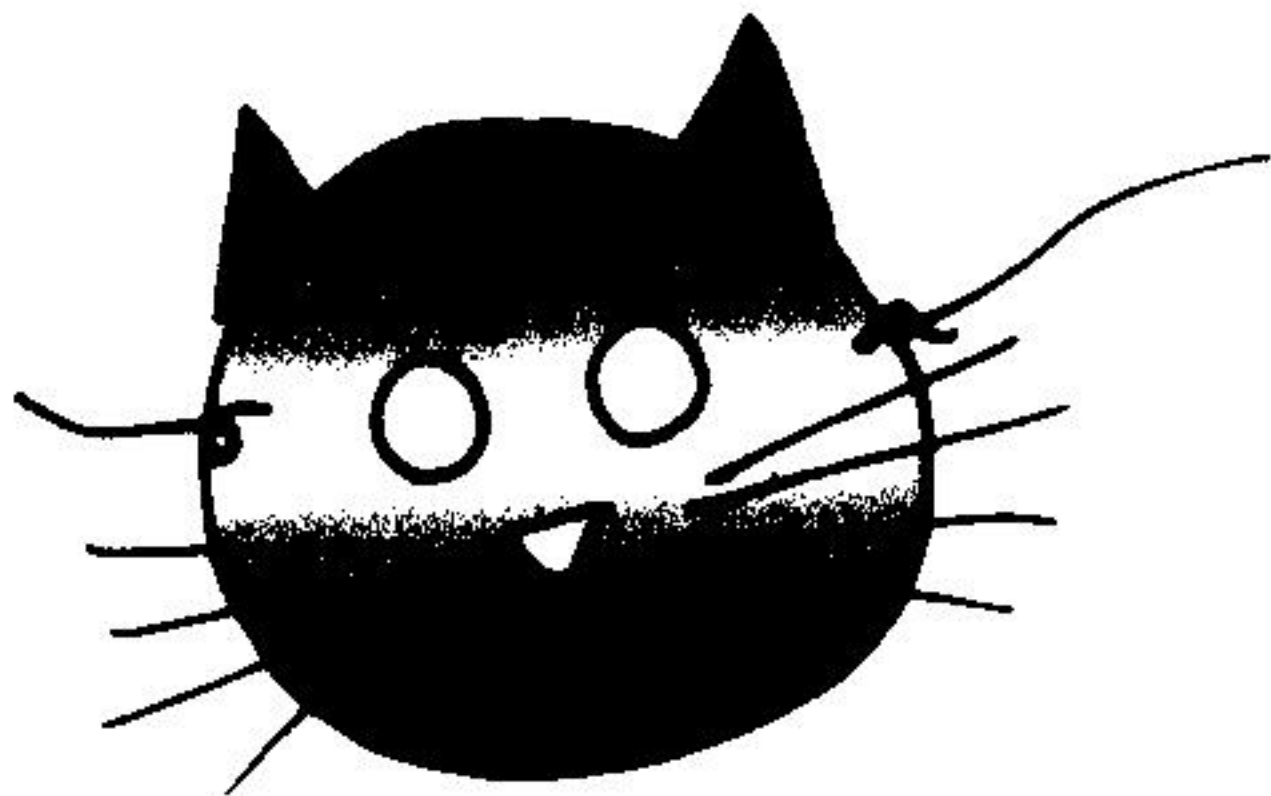
Nil

Activity

Children stand in a circle to play the "Copy cat" game. Make one child the "copy cat". He/She can wear a cat mask. When the "cat" makes an action like wiggling his/her finger or stamping the floor, the rest of the children must copy the action. Then the "cat" gives the mask to another child who wears the mask and becomes the new "cat" whose actions others copy.

Variation

Ask children to sit on the floor in a circle and give each child four blocks. Arrange your four blocks in a pattern and ask children to copy the pattern. Discuss the 'feeling good' when some one likes what you are doing. Start with simple patterns.





Activity No. 2

Objective

To encourage positive behaviour

To be aware of one's hands

To have positive feelings about oneself

Group size

Large

Materials

Paper, crayons, colour powder, plastic slates, maida Paste

Preparation

Mix the coloured powder with maida paste.

Attention

After the activity talk to children about washing their hands. Discuss about washing up and cleaning up rules, e.g. no splashing water, leaving the sink clean. Praise children for following the rules.

Activity

Talk to children about hands and how they could be used for good things, like clapping hands, sharing toys, waving etc. Give each child a paper and some crayons. Make children trace their hands on the paper and colour them.

Variation I

Teach songs about using hands for actions like clapping, flying, swimming.

Variation II

Make children dip hands in paint (poured in plates). Then press their hands on paper to get the impression. After one colour dries another colour could be used.





Activity No. 3

Objective

To learn to be friendly and treat others kindly

To learn to take turns

Group size

Large

Material

Beanbag, ball or small soft toy.

Preparation

To make beanbag see Activity No. 3 in Chapter 2, Physical Development

Attention

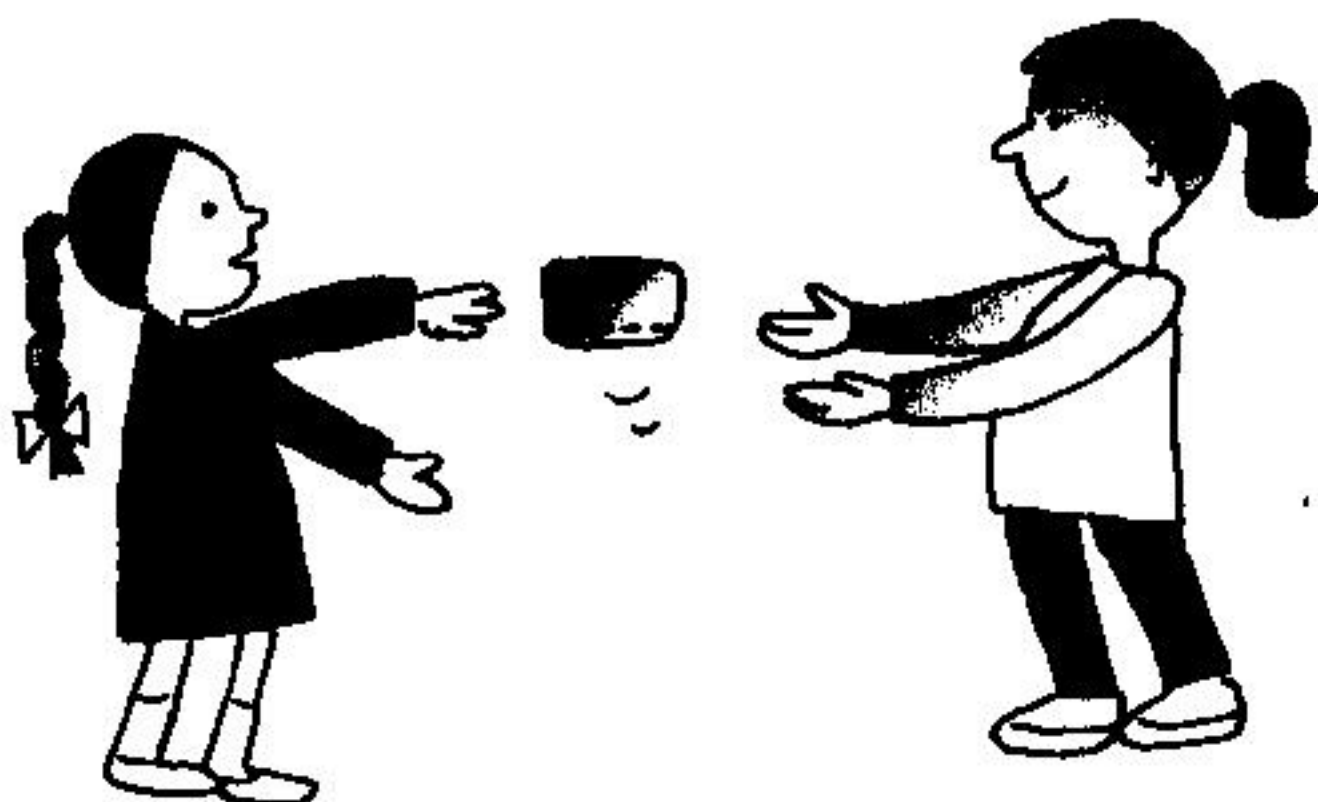
A good way to make children think about communicating and sharing thoughts.

Activity

Ask children to form a circle. Throw the beanbag to a child. The child catches the bag and says "hello" to another child in the circle and throws the bag to him/her (e.g. If Ram catches the bag he says "hello" to Raju, and throws the bag to Raju). Continue the game till all the children have said hello.

Variation

Talk about what it means to share ideas. Tell someone something one likes, e.g. a favourite game, toy or food. Pass the beanbag around the circle and when a child receives it, he/she shares an idea, like what toy he/she likes to play with or what he/she likes to eat.





Activity No . 4

Objective

To copy and draw

To play as team

To enjoy working together

To be aware of self

Group size

Large

Materials

Black board and chalk.

Preparation

Draw a simple picture on the black board, such as a house, a man or a tree. Divide the picture into distinct parts for example. If you draw a picture of a man show the definite divisions into head, body, two legs and two arms (four parts).

Attention

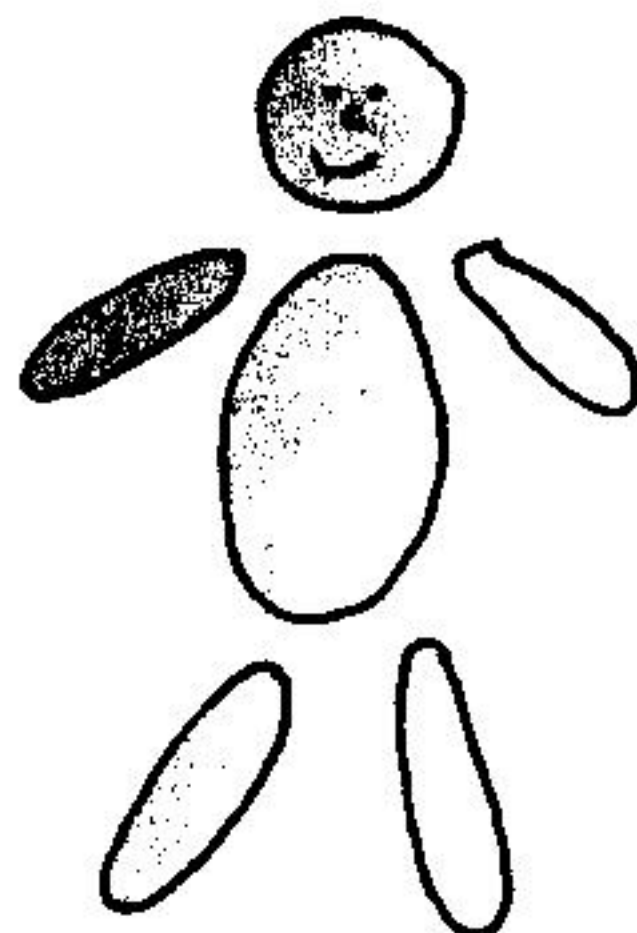
The drawings should have definite divisions and the children should understand the divisions they are expected to draw.

Activity

Divide the children into groups of four. Take two groups at a time, while the other groups watch. The first child in each group must run and draw the head, the second the body, the third the legs and the fourth the hands and complete the picture. The aim of every group is not only to finish first but to draw the picture well. After these two groups finish select two more groups and play with the same picture or any other picture.

Variation

You can increase the interest by drawing different things every time you play the game or adding more parts, for example hair or hat in body parts.





Activity No. 5

Objective

To identify ways children can help the teacher

To perform simple tasks accurately

To work together

Group size

Large

Materials

Ordinary classroom equipment and material

Preparation

Arrange things around the room and place in different places. Throw some paper on the floor etc. Let the room look messy.

Activity

When children come into the room tell them that you want to tell them a story, but there are so many things out of place in the room and that you are busy and need their help. Ask children if they can describe some of the things that must be done to put the room back in order. Ask each child or group of children to do a task. Let children suggest the task. If children do not notice all the things that have to be done, give them some clues to help them

Variation

Make up a classroom job list and give each child a simple weekly responsibility such as watering the plants, sharpening pencils, cleaning blackboards etc. Discuss with children about the importance of their job.



Activity No. 6

Objective

To follow rules

To observe

To get to know others

Group size

Large

Materials

An object like a block as the bone for the doggie

A curtain ring or key ring

Preparation

Nil.

Activity

Ask children to sit in a circle with their hands on their lap. A child is selected as the "doggie" who sits in the centre with eyes closed. The object for the 'bone' is kept next to the "doggie". A child from the circle tiptoes to the bone and takes it and goes back to his/her place and hides the bone behind him/her. Then all the children say together, "Doggie, doggie where is your bone, Guess three times and take it home". The doggie opens his eyes and guesses. If the guess is right he/she can go back to the circle and the child who took the bone becomes the next doggie.

Variation

Make children sit in a circle. Let one child step out and close her/his eyes. Pass the ring around from hand to hand without showing the ring. Beat drum or clap hands. When the beat or clapping stops, the child who is out looks around and guesses the name of the child who has the ring. Allow three guesses and give clues to help the child. Then start the game again by sending out another child.





Activity No. 7

Objective

Activity

To learn to care for others

To be thankful to people around them

To express positive feelings

Group size

Large

Materials

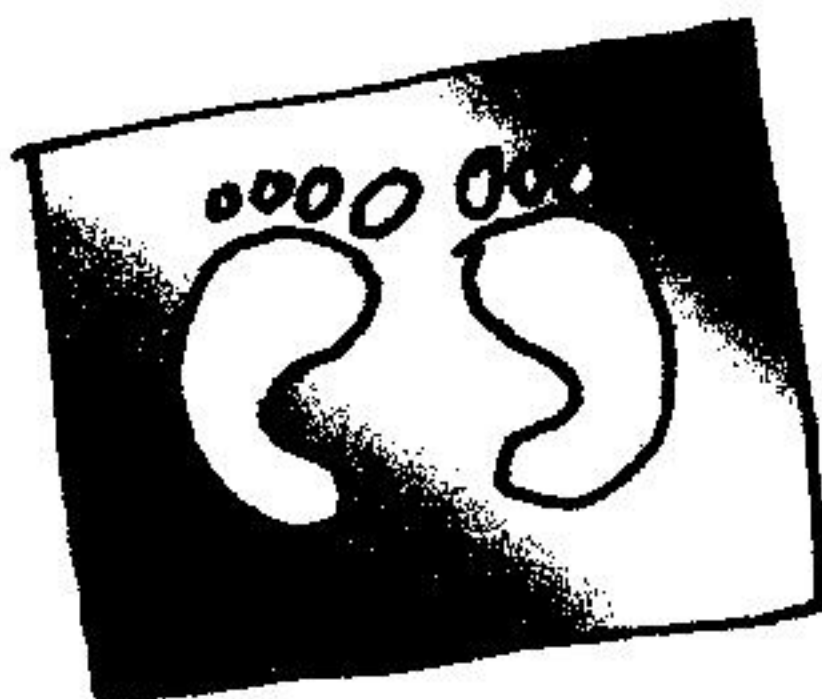
A drawing book and crayons for each child paints, pictures from magazines

Preparation

Nil.

Activity

In this activity children make their own scrapbooks of things that they are thankful for. Make children do a page at a time and this can be carried on over a period of time. Write a sentence on each page and make children draw or stick pictures. e.g. I'm glad for hands that clap for fun. (This page could be for child's hand prints). I'm glad for feet to jump and run (draw child's feet and colour). I'm glad for my mother who looks after me. I'm glad for my father who is tall as can be. (photographs of the parents could be pasted or the child could draw pictures of them). In this manner you could make children draw, colour or paste pictures of things that they are happy about and thus make up the whole scrapbook.





Activity No. 8

Objective

Activity

To understand the concept of sharing

To share materials for an art project

To develop artistic abilities

Group size

Large

Materials

One large sheet of paper for four children, paste, coloured paper (glazed / varnished paper)

Preparation

Cut out petals with coloured papers. Place 6-7 petals for each child in a box on the table. Set a sheet of paper and paste for each table.

Activity

Discuss with the children what it means to share by asking questions like this, "What does sharing mean? Why do we share? When is it good to share? How can we share in a classroom?"

Encourage all the children to participate in the discussion. Now seat the children at each table and tell them that they are going to make flowers and they must share the paper petals and the paste, and do the sticking together in a group. Let them take turns. Encourage the children to share the materials and praise them for good sharing behaviour.

Variation I

Use same grouping system for other activities. Discuss the need to work in groups. Gradually increase the number of children sharing the materials.

Variation II

Start a discussion of how children share things with the members of their family at home. Let each child give one way in which he/she shares with other members in his/her family.



Activity No. 9

Objective

To increase interaction

To learn to take turns

To have fun

Group size

Small

Materials

Dice and cut outs of six parts of the face for each child.

Preparation

Cut out a circle for a face, cut two eyes and two ears, a nose, a mouth and hair. Each number on the dice must correspond to one part of the face.

No. 1 = face

No. 2 = eyes

No. 3 = hair

No. 4 = nose

No. 5 = mouth

No. 6 = ears

Write this out on a card or on the sides of the dice.

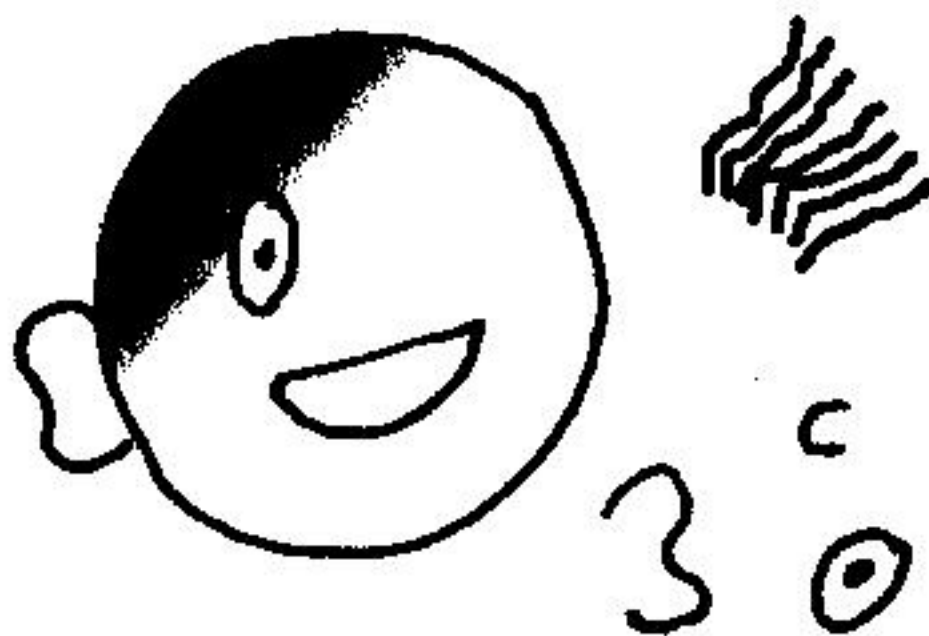
Attention

Lamination of the parts of the face makes it long lasting.

The parts could also be fixed with "Stick on". (commercial synthetic sticking substance which can be used on smooth surfaces).

Activity

Ask children to sit in a circle and keep all the parts of the faces on a tray in the centre. Children take turns to throw the dice to select the cutout. To start the game, the child who throws number 'One' will pick the face "cutout" and place it on the floor or table. Then the next child throws the dice and picks up the part of the face which corresponds with the number on the dice e.g. if the dice shows five, the child must pick the cut-out of the mouth and place it on the face. If the dice shows the same number again, the child passes the dice to the next child. In this manner the children take turns to throw the dice and complete the face.





Activity No. 10

Objective

To highlight the special qualities of each child

To increase self-esteem

Group size

Large

Materials

Paper and crayons.

Preparation

Nil.

Activity

Give each child a paper and ask the children to draw their faces. Make them think of themselves and draw their own features like curly hair, big eyes etc. Then ask children to draw their body with all its parts, like hands and legs. Give suggestions and make them draw as many details as possible. When the children finish drawing, they sit in a circle on the floor. Talk about the parts of the body. Every one has the same body parts like eyes, nose, mouth, eyebrows, finger, toes etc. but each one looks different. Now write their names on their drawings and display them on the wall. Discuss how every one looks different and that is what makes them special.

Variation

On another day discuss with children what they like best. Give each child a paper and make them draw what they like most. Display these pictures next to their "self portrait". Title the display "Special things that I like".



ROLL A BALL

Activity No. 11

Objective

To learn about other children

To learn names of other children

To wait and take turns

Group size

Large

Material

Large rubber ball

Preparation

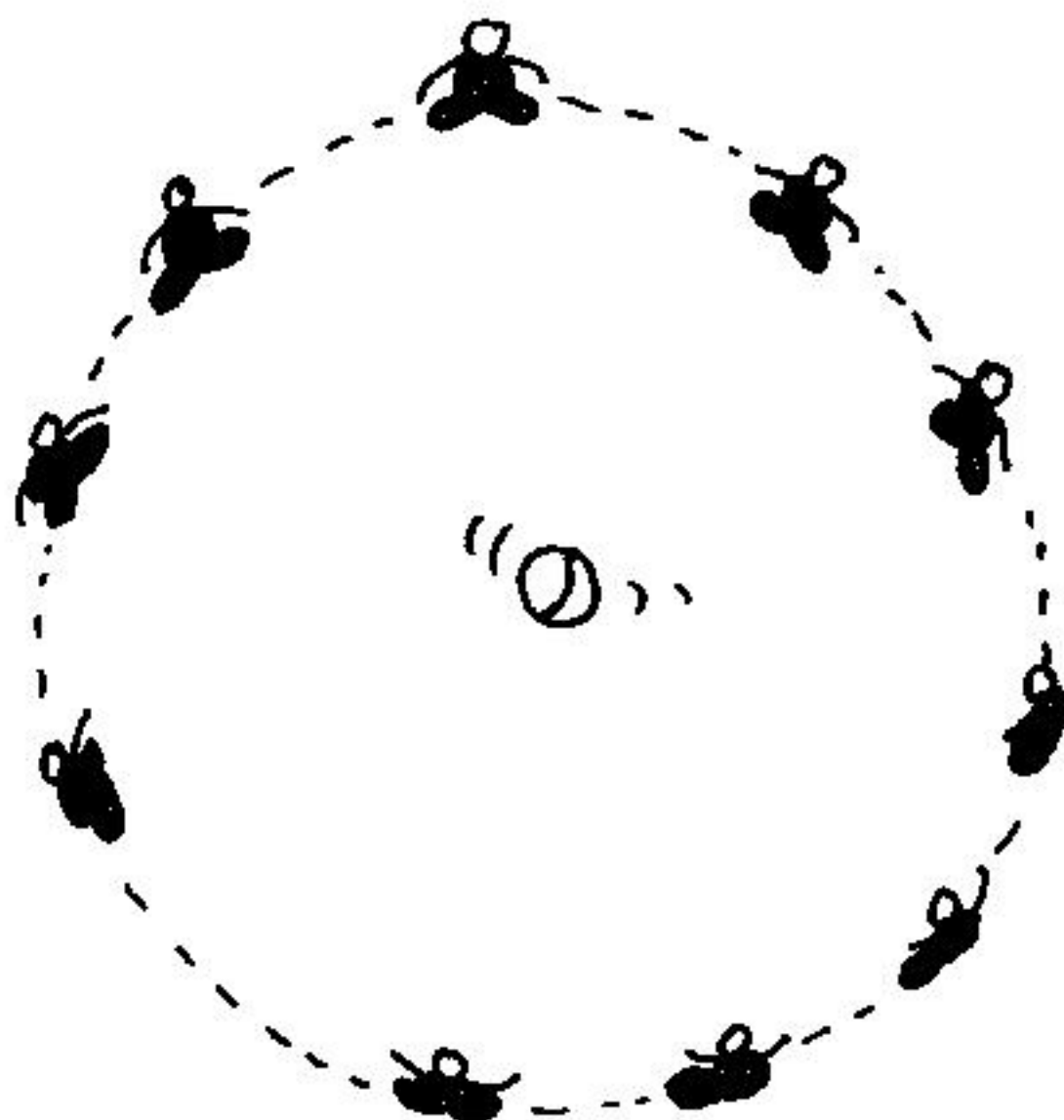
Nil.

Activity

Ask the children to sit in a circle on the floor with their legs crossed. Roll the ball to one child. When the child receives the ball she tells her name and something she likes to do. Then the child rolls the ball back to you. Roll the ball to each child in turn until all the children have had a chance to speak.

Variation

To start the game you roll the ball to one child, then ask a question like "How did you come to school? What did you eat this morning?" The child gives an answer and in turn rolls the ball to another child and asks a question. Play the game till all the children have had a chance to ask and answer a question.





Activity No. 12

Objective

To understand the need for hygiene and clean personal habits.

To practise various personal habits by role play.

Group size

Large

Materials

Objects or pictures of tooth brush, toothpaste, soap and towel and comb.

Preparation

Mark out circles on the floor, one for "combing the hair" circle, one "bathing" and the third "brushing teeth".

Keep the objects or pictures in the three circle.

Activity

Ask the children to hold hands and form a circle. Play music or clap your hands and ask the children to move around in the circle. When you stop the music, the children should step into one of the circles drawn on the floor and do the action of that circle. e.g. if the children step into the combing circle, they have to pretend to comb their hair. If a child does not do the action, she must come forward and do it for the rest of the class. After this the game can be started again. Keep playing till all the children have had a chance to move to all the circles. Discuss with children the need for clean habits.



Activity No. 13

Objective

To experience group feeling

To follow rules

To understand other people's feelings

Group size

Large

Materials

Nil

Preparation

Nil.

Activity

Ask children to stand in pairs back to back with their elbows linked. One child should be left without a partner. Give directions that when you blow the whistle they must change partners and the child without a partner will also try to get a partner. After they have changed partners, there will again be one child without a partner. Write her name on the black board and start the game again. Keep playing and keep a note of the number of children who have been without a partner in each turn. Discuss with children about why everyone should have a turn to get a partner.





Activity No. 14

Objective

To help children to get to know each other

To increase concentration and attention span.

Group size

Large

Materials

Nil

Preparation

Nil.

Activity

Make children sit in a circle. Ask children to clap hands twice and then snap their fingers twice. Do this continuously and rhythmically until the children have learnt to do it well. When the children clap their hands ask them to say a child's name and while they snap their fingers say 'be quick'. Now start the game like this - say 'Rita' (clapping hands) and 'be quick' (snapping fingers). The child whose name is called will call out another child's name and say 'be quick'. Carry on the game till all the children's names have been called out.



Activity No. 15

Objective

To help children to get to know each other.

To learn to co-operate

To express positive feelings

Group size

Large

Materials

Nil

Preparation

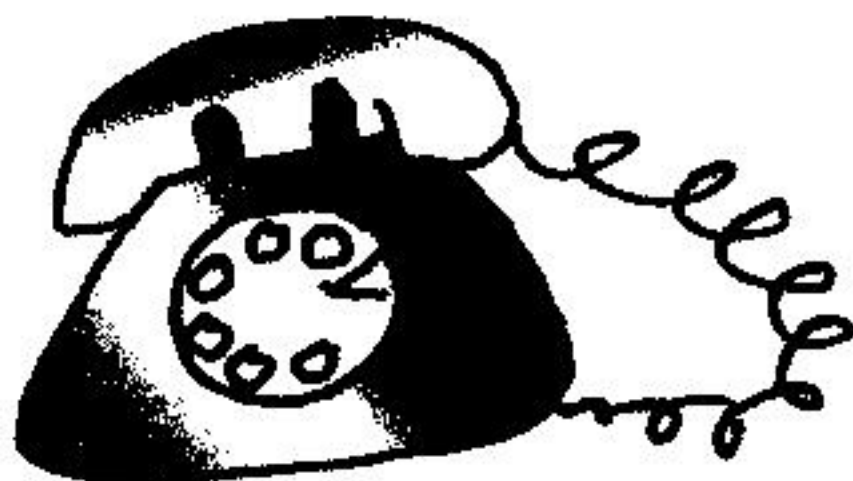
Nil.

Activity

Make all the children sit in a circle. Start the game by saying, "There is a place next to me and I want Vijaya to come and sit next to me. Vijaya, please come". The child must get up and come and sit next to you. Now the child sitting on the right of where Vijaya was sitting will call another child to come and sit next to her. Let the game continue in this manner till all the children have moved from their original places.

Variation

Keep a used telephone, toy telephone or wooden piece in the classroom which can be used as a telephone. Play the same game, with children using the telephone by turns.



**Activity No. 16****Objective**

To help children to get to know each other

To increase self confidence

To develop memory.

Group size

Large

Materials

Nil

Preparation

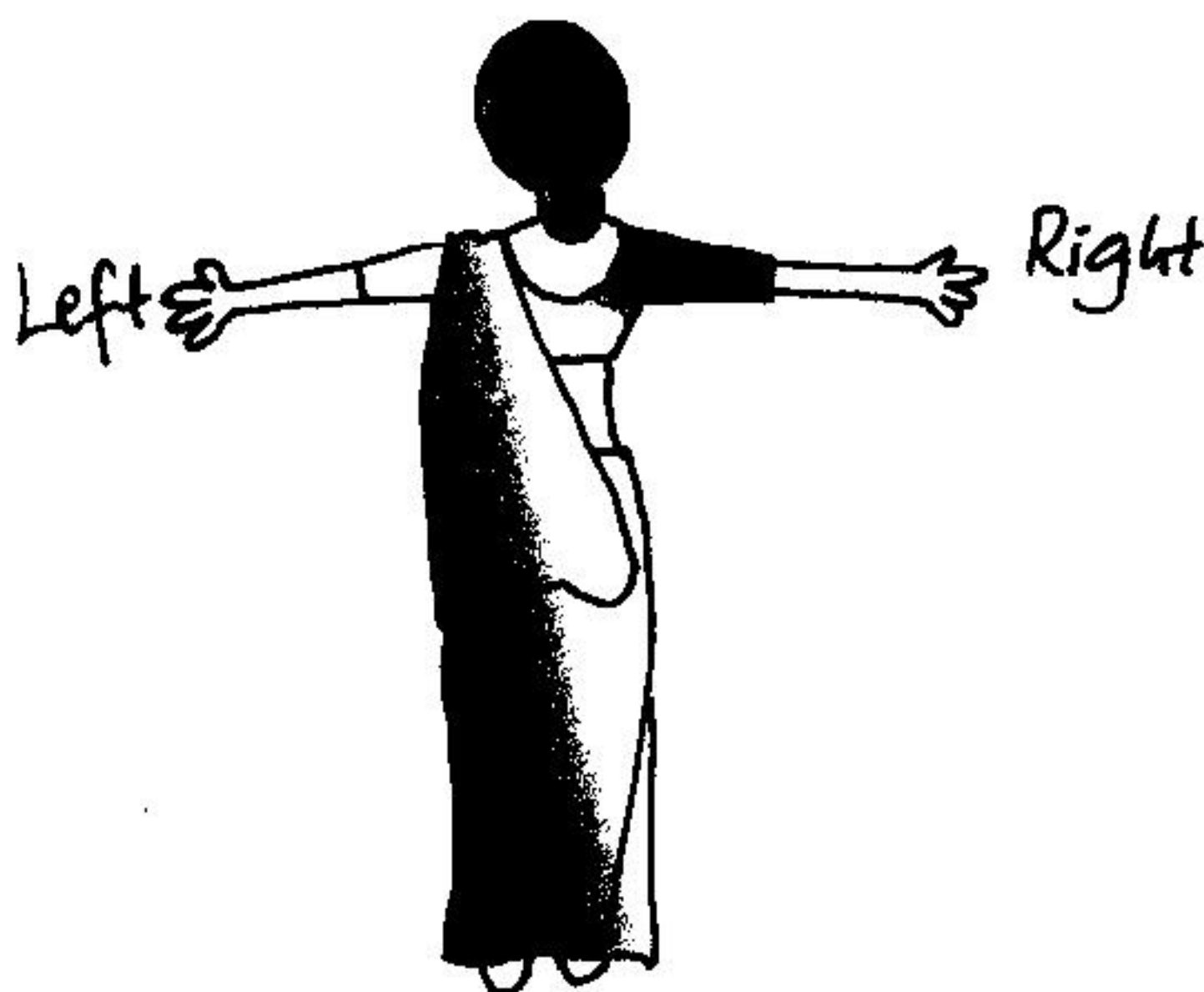
Nil

Illustration of left-right.

Activity

Make all the children stand in a circle. Let children introduce themselves to the group.

All the children should know each other's names. Now stand in the middle and point to a child and say 'zip'. The child has to call out the name of the child standing to her right. When you point to a child and say 'zap' then the child has to call out the name of the child to her left. Keep moving around and point to all the children by turns. Do it slowly at first and then start calling out quickly. If a child makes a mistake she/he should step out of the game. Carry on the game until only two children are left.





Activity No. 17

Objective

To teach children concepts of nutrition

To teach good eating habits.

Group size

Small

Materials

Two dice and the special Snakes and Ladders board with food concepts written on it, coloured counters.

Preparation

For the preparation of the dice and the board, see Appendix.

Activity

This activity is similar to the usual "Snakes and Ladders" game, but with messages on nutrition and good eating habits in the squares. The children sit around the board and throw the dice in turn. When they land in a square with a ladder they climb up. Read and discuss the reason given in the square like "You have good eyes because you eat carrots every day". If the child lands in a square with a snake's mouth the child will have to move down the snake. Give reasons again, like, "You ate food on the road side, which was dirty and has made you ill". In this manner the children can take turns and keep playing till all the children finish the board. After the game they can discuss various good and bad eating habits.



Activity No. 18

Objective

To respond to the requests of others

To understand the value of helpfulness.

Group size

Medium

Materials

Finger puppets of a mother mouse, and three small mice, a black, a brown and a white mouse. (See Appendix).

Preparation

Nil

Attention

The story can be repeated for as many days as the children like.

Activity

Tell the story of the 'Little White Mouse'. Tell the children about each small mouse and its action. Explain why it is important to carry out an errand and help others.

The Story

Once there was a Mother Mouse and three little mice named Blackie, Brownie and Whitie. Mother Mouse one day said to Blackie, "Will you run to the kitchen and get me a piece of bread for our lunch". But Blackie said, "Mother, I don't know where the kitchen is and how to go there. I am too small". So Mother Mouse got the bread herself. The next day she asked Brownie. He went out but came back with no bread, saying he went to play with his friends and forgot. So Mother Mouse got the bread herself. The next day Mother Mouse asked the third mouse to get some bread. Whitie said "Yes, mother, tell me how to go there and how much to bring". He listened to her and ran away. Soon he was back with the bread and said "That was easy. Mother, I am glad I went." Mother said, "Thank you very much, Whitie, you have done a good job."



Activity No. 19

Objective

To learn good habits

To become aware of general cleanliness and personal hygiene.

Group size

Small

Materials

Rubber dolls, basins of water, soap and towels.

Preparation

Nil.

Activity

Discuss with the children about general cleanliness, such as washing hands before meals, bathing, keeping ones things clean etc. Give a group of two or three children a rubber doll and a basin of water. Give pieces of soap and a small towel. Let children take turns to bathe the doll. Then sing this song with actions.

'Brush, brush, brush your teeth brush it every day.

"Father, mother, brother, sister, brush it every day.

Wash, wash, wash your face...
..... etc.

Bathe, bathe, bathe,
yourself..... etc.

Drink, drink, drink your
milk, drink it
everyday....." etc.

Variation

Discuss with children about keeping their surroundings clean through stories like the story of, "The man who slipped on the banana skin".



THE LEADER

Activity No. 20

Objective

To develop self esteem in children

To make children feel important

To shed inhibition in children

Group size

Large

Materials

A small box, a chair, slips of paper with the names of all the children

Preparation

Decorate the box with coloured paper and write the names of all the children on slips of paper and put into the box. Decorate a small stool or chair and place in the front of the class.

Activity

Place the box in an important place in the class. Each day you pick up one of the slips and call out the name of the child on the slip of paper. This child is made to sit on the special chair and you could talk about her. Talk about all the positive characteristics of the child. Then you could make the child the leader of the class for the day. She could suggest the activity for the day and also assist you in organising the activity for the whole class. She could help you put away things and arrange the class. This will make her wanted and important. (The slip of this child could be put away at the end of the day). The next day pick up another slip and this child will be the leader for the day. In this manner the whole class will have a chance to feel important and be the leader.

The young child experiences emotions often powerfully, but is unable to understand or name them, or to handle and control them. The child is also sensitive to the world around him, which he/she experiences through the senses and from the first year expresses feelings through laughter, tears, and spontaneous sounds and movements.

As children grow and mature, their emotions proceed through a series of stages, from the infant's relatively undifferentiated responses to what is termed as emotional maturity. By the age of three months, an infant can differentiate between distress and delight, and by two years of age a child can express a full range of emotions, including fear, distrust, anger, jealousy, distress, delight, elation and affection.

In the early childhood years, children learn new and socially acceptable ways of expressing their feelings. They have to be helped to

- recognise and name their feelings,
- understand and accept them, and
- find wholesome outlets

Hostile feelings, aggression, resentment and other negative feelings are often experienced by children often and have to be recognised and handled. Here are some common situations in which resentment is felt by children, and ways of dealing with it.

- Feelings of jealousy or hostility arise with the arrival in the home of a new baby. This may show up in school in behaviour such as hitting and hurting other children, or by spanking a doll or throwing it down and stamping it. Giving children rubber or rag dolls, clay and blocks and letting them pound, punch and hit these toys help them release the hostile feelings within.
- Children also use verbal aggression against other children as well as adults. When the teacher is aware of this and provides a warm, supportive relationship, the child will be able to handle such feelings and even check them.
- Another source of resentment in children is the demand made on them to 'keep clean' and the fear and guilt they feel when they get dirty while at play. Children whose parents emphasise





**Clay, dolls,
blocks,
rubber toys
and balls
help children
release their
feelings
without
hurting
people.**

on cleanliness and proper behaviour are often disturbed and anxious. In such a situation the teacher has to recognise this anxiety and make the child understand that becoming dirty is all right, but washing up afterwards is very important.

- Often children, who are very timid or shy, may not show their resentment or hostility openly but express themselves by doing something quietly, because parents and teachers approve of quiet children. The teacher can help such children by allowing them to express their behaviour.
- Failure to get attention and response will arouse resentment and hostility, especially in insecure children, who want reassurance. As teachers you need to understand that all children need equal attention. When you give attention to one child, others may feel left out.

Avenues for the expression of feelings

Motor expression This is the simplest and most direct means of releasing feelings. That is why hitting, pushing and biting are common among young children. Using materials like clay, dolls, blocks, rubber toys and balls help children release their feelings without hurting people around them.

Language It is another outlet. A crying child or a child who uses angry words reveals a lot of feelings and usually is not harmful to people around.

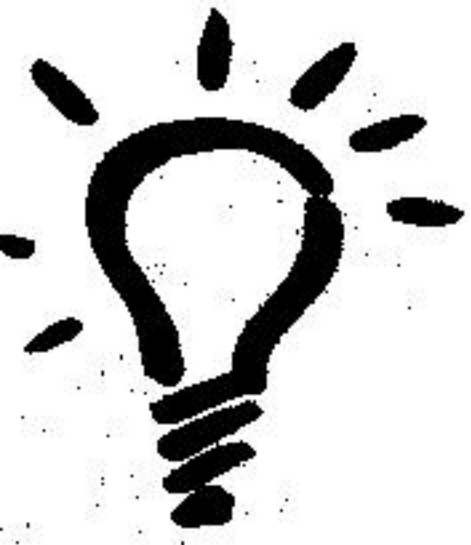
Art and music These are also very good avenues for the expression of feelings. Children should be allowed to use these media in their own way to express their feelings through their work.

~ } Creative arts and activities can help the child find new ways

- to express and control feelings,
- to experience the joy of creation, and
- to communicate meaningfully with others.

Children love to work with their hands. As they do so, they are exploring with their senses, gaining new experiences, using their imagination, practising skills with their hands and fingers and coordinating and controlling their muscles. At the same time, they are also expressing their feelings – wonder, joy, love of beauty, fun, excitement, love, humour and energy. Children also get great





Acting out troubled situations and real life problems gives them an outlet for their emotions and enables them to cope with situations which they may not be able to talk about.



satisfaction and a sense of achievement and pride in making things by themselves and in communicating their feelings non-verbally through these products. Side by side they are learning to appreciate beauty of form, both in Nature and in man-made things and in the things that they make.

Creative activities

Performing arts like mime, movement, role-play, song, dance and drama are constructive ways to channelise and express emotions and feelings and to communicate. The joy of being able to do what one observes around him/her and also what others are doing brings a feeling of self confidence. Role-play helps children understand the feelings, roles and work of others. Acting out troubled situations and real life problems gives them an outlet for their emotions and enables them cope with situations which they may not be able to talk about. Therefore any material or activity that allows for success, that challenges but does not frustrate, and leave children with a sense of accomplishment helps them to express their feelings and acquire mastery over themselves.

Arts activities also help children express and overcome destructive impulses and negative feelings of fear, anger, aggression, hurt, sadness, loneliness in ways, which do not hurt oneself or others. Pounding or squeezing clay, breaking up sand structures or tearing up paper are safe non-verbal ways to express anger, hurt or aggression. Stories, drama, doll play and role-play give opportunities to enact feelings like fear, sorrow and anger as well as joy, love and enthusiasm. Punishing dolls or fighting in dramas provides an outlet for aggression and anger, both verbal and non-verbal. In these ways, children gradually learn to express, handle and control their feelings and learn that others have similar feelings. They also learn to communicate their feelings, thoughts and ideas.

Children also enlarge their experiences by using their imagination. They learn to express their feelings, to control them and communicate with others by

- creating with their hands, as in art and crafts
- acting with their bodies, as in movement and dance
- using their voices, as in speech and song.



Besides structured games and activities in this chapter, children should get opportunities for free play alone or in small groups with and without materials like sand, clay, water, dolls, blocks, toys and constructional kits to experience activities for emotional and aesthetic development.

**Free play
alone or in
small groups
with sand,
clay, water,
dolls, blocks,
toys and
constructional
kits for
emotional
and aesthetic
development.**





Activity No. 1

Objective

To visualise form and express forms with the body

To increase control of large motor movement

To follow directions.

Group size

Large

Material

Tape recorder/ drums.

Dance or marching music

Preparation:

Nil

Attention:

The action or task should be easy at first and made progressively more difficult.

Can you think of some more themes for statues?



Activity

Ask children to move around in a circle while the music is played. When the music stops, they must stay absolutely still, like a statue. Any child who makes even a slight movement must step out of the game. The game goes on until only one child remains.

Variation I

When the music stops, ask the children to freeze like an animal or an object or a person (e.g. elephant, monkey, train, tree, dancer). The child who moves drops out of the game and can be made to call out the name of the statue of his/her choice.

Variation II

Play music. Ask children to move around in a circle. Tell them to balance on one foot when the music stops (child who cannot stand still on one foot could use the support of a chair or a table) Slightly more difficult tasks can be tried after some practice.

Variation III

When the music stops, ask children to form a statue in groups. e.g. three or four children can form a train, a tree, a house or a dog.



Activity No. 2

Objective

- To move in rhythm
- To express feelings of joy
- To learn simple dance steps
- To move gracefully

Group size

Large

Materials

Some music or rhythmic beat of a musical instrument

Preparation

Nil

Activity

Let children stand in a circle. Clap a simple rhythm, for instance, two quick beats and one slow, or two slow and three quick. Let the children repeat it with you. Keep clapping till all the children clap together in the correct beat. Then change to a different rhythm. Vary the rhythm from time to time.

Variation I

Let children stand in a semi-circle. Clap a simple rhythm and ask the children to move their bodies to the beat, each time in a different way. Show them movements like sway from side to side, sway forward and backward, swing the arms, swing one arm at a time, swing the foot etc., Soon children will start moving to rhythm.

Variation II

Let the children stamp their feet to the rhythm, at first standing in the same place, and later walking round in a circle.

Variation III

Teach children simple dance steps and folk dances.





Activity No. 3

Objective

To recognise emotions in others.

To identify different emotions like sadness, anger and happiness

Group size

Large

Materials

Three masks - a happy face, a sad face and an angry face. Attach a rod to each mask so that the child can hold it in front of the face. Eight magazine pictures that will evoke emotions, like spilt juice, circus clown, broken toy, delicious looking cake or hurt knee.

Preparation

Make masks of a happy face, a sad face and an angry face (see Appendix).

Activity

Gather the children into a group and tell them that they are going to look at some pictures and learn how they feel looking at them. Seat the children in a circle, and keep the pictures you have collected in front of you. Show the children the three masks (happy, sad and angry). To begin the game, show the first picture to the children. Then ask one child to come forward and pick up a mask that shows the feeling in the picture. e.g. circus clown - the mask with the happy face. Ask the child to explain why the picture makes him/her feel that way. You could discuss further with the children about the times they feel happy and how they can share this feeling with others. In case the feeling is sad or angry you discuss how they show it or help others feel better.



Activity No. 4

Objective

To match movements to specific sounds

To learn to dance

Group size

Large

Material

Musical instrument to make different sounds

Preparation

Nil

Activity

Demonstrate a few movements to appropriate sounds, e.g. a soft, slow sound for a gentle breeze, a quick beat for a train, a heavy one for an elephant. Repeat these a few times and let the children learn them well. To play the game make the sound and tell the children to listen carefully and make appropriate movements. As you keep changing the sounds, the children must also change their movements. Soon the children will be dancing.

Variation

Tell a story and ask the children to move their bodies to suit the different sounds they hear in the story. e.g. it was raining, first a drizzle, then there was heavy rain and a strong wind, the trees were swaying etc. You can ask the children to accompany you with body movements and actions for the sounds. For example, when you say "the trees were swaying", let the children lift their hands, and sway from left to right. Continue the story, making up more and more sounds and actions as you go on.





Activity No. 5

Objective

To observe and learn to imitate

To guess the meaning of actions

To express ideas through actions

Group size

Large

Materials

Nil

Preparation

Nil

Attention

These activities can be done in any language.



Activity

Let the children stand in a circle. You stand in the center and do an action. Ask the children, "What am I doing?". The children must guess the action. After a few rounds, give turns to children to act, while other guess.

Variation I

Let children sit in a circle. A child stands up and says, "I went to the market". The others must ask, "What did you buy? The child acts out an object and the others guess. e.g. ice cream, a licking action. If the children guess correctly, they can say, "What did you do then?" and the child acts out another action. Continue for two or three rounds and then change the subject.

Variation II

Ask children to stand in a circle. Let the children imitate the action that you call out. e.g. 'Lets become elephants'. Call out other birds and animals.

Variation III

The action could be sung out 'If I were a soldier, this is what I would do....' The children sing and do the action.



Activity No. 6

Objective

To develop balance and co-ordination

To control bodily movements

To follow instructions

To express joy

Group size

Large

Materials

Nil

Preparation

Nil.

Activity

Let the children stand in a circle all facing in one direction (clockwise or anti-clockwise). Start clapping or beating a rhythm and ask the children to move keeping time to your beat. When you clap slowly they must move slowly, and when you clap faster they must walk faster. When you clap very fast they run. Change the pace from time to time

Variation I

Play the same game, but this time clap your hands or beat a rhythm soft and loud. Soft means to move slowly and loud means to move fast.

Variation II

Stand children in a circle and move in one direction (clockwise or anti-clockwise). Sing any action song that the children know and make them move performing the actions. Use different speeds and rhythms, styles and shapes.



Activity No. 7

Objective

To learn to control and master movement

To use imagination

To move to rhythm

Group size

Large

Materials

Drums, stools, planks, ropes, tyres, cloth, sheets of newspaper, chalk and boxes

Preparation

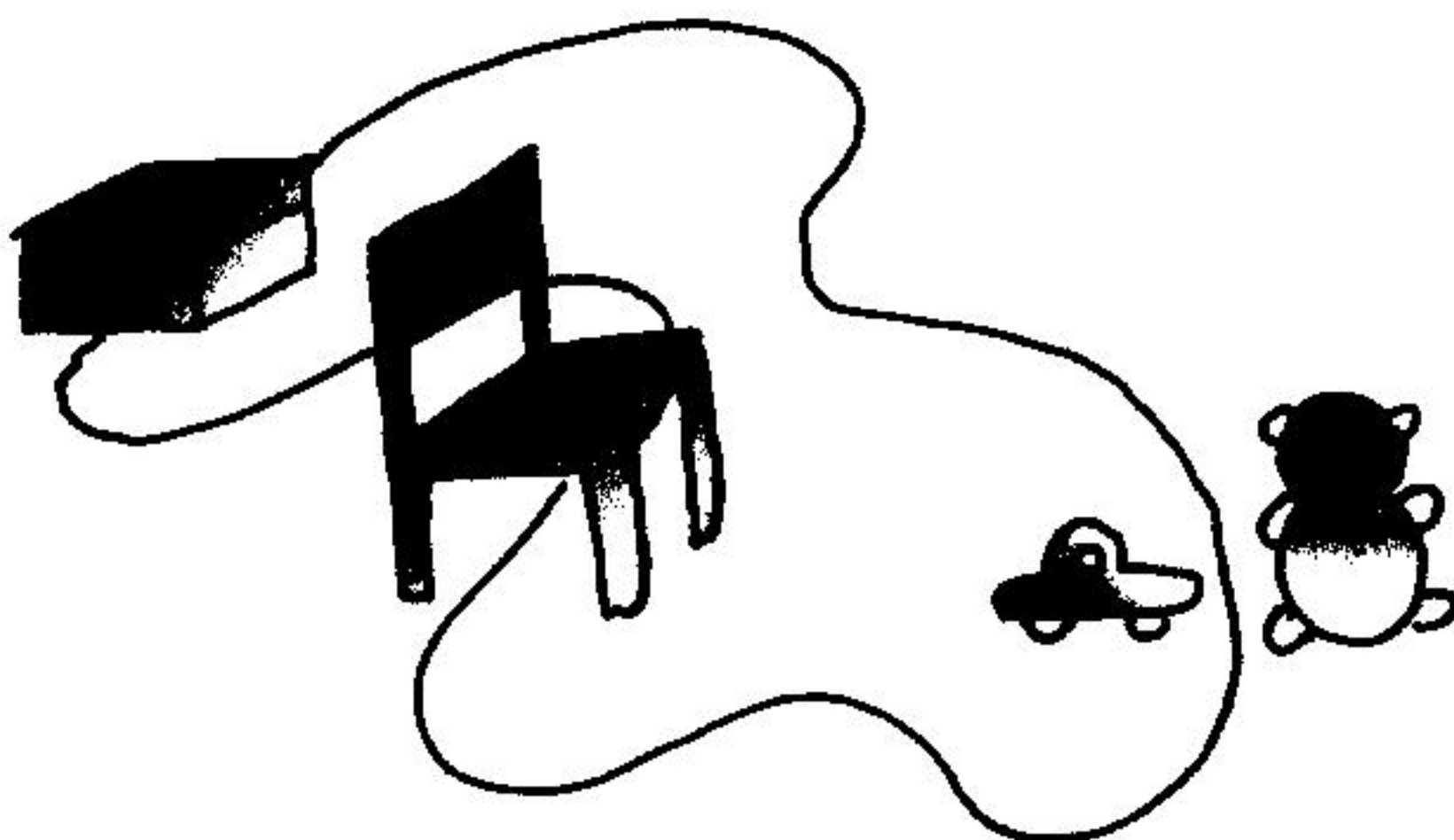
Set up a maze with the articles around the room. Arrange the articles in a path way, draw arrows with chalk for the direction which the children have to follow.

Activity

Ask children to form a line and play the game one at a time. One child must finish going through the maze before the next starts. Tell the child what to do at each obstacle, e.g. jump over the stool, go under the rope, walk along the line, hop between the two toys and so on. Vary the commands for the next child. Use a rhythm to control the movements, changing from fast to slow. Later children can take the place of the leader and give the commands.

Variation I

Play music or beat a drum and make children move through the maze keeping steps to the beat of the music.





Activity No. 8

Objective

To learn about different textures

To have control of material

To appreciate beauty

To be aware of patterns

Group size

Medium

Materials

Thin drawing paper, pencil, crayons, textured surfaces, such as thick chart paper / cardboard, and coins, leaves, sandpaper, sack cloth, mats, etc.

Activity

Cut out in thick chart paper / card board any design or shape. Place this under the drawing paper. Ask the child to rub with crayons on the design with overlapping strokes. The image of the cut out will appear on the paper. Make them place different textures under the paper and rub different coloured crayon over the textures. This texture will be transferred on to the paper to form interesting designs.

Variation I

Leaves with thick veins, coins etc., could be used to give different effects.

Variation II

Give children pencils and paper and ask them to scribble over the whole paper in continuous lines. There should be a variety of straight and curved lines. Now ask them to look for shapes created within the lines. Draw out these shapes heavily with a sketch pen. Let the children colour these shapes and name them.



Activity No. 9

Objective

To paint a picture together
To express ideas and feelings.

Group size

Small

Materials

Crayons, paints, thick hand-made brushes, large sheets of thick paper like brown paper or newspaper or an old saree or cloth. Maida paste for pasting the sheets.

Preparation

Paste several sheets of newspaper or a few sheets of thick brown paper or old cloth on the wall, up to a height suitable for children, and let it dry. Children can paint on the topmost layer.

Attention

A mural is a large work of art made by a number of children. An individual child can also make this. Older children can also paint murals directly on a wall.

Later, brown paper or newspaper sheets can be pasted on top of the painted paper. New murals can be made every week or once a month.

Activity

First discuss the theme of the picture with the children. Let each child decide what he/she is going to paint. Help by giving suggestions. Then give out small pots of paint and brushes and supervise and guide while they paint the picture together.

Variation

Draw the outlines of the pictures the children want to make and let them complete it as a collage (For details of how to make a collage see Activity No. 12 in this chapter).



Activity No. 10

Objective

- To create beautiful things
- To develop the finger muscles
- To develop eye-hand coordination

Group size

Medium

Materials

Chart paper, blunt needles and woollen thread

Preparation

Cut out pieces of cardboard about 10 x 15 cms in size. Draw out lines of shapes or common simple figures like fruits, vegetables, animals, birds etc. Punch holes around the outline. Thread the needles with sufficient woollen thread and tie to one of the holes on the figure. Or you can cut out the shape, and make holes along the edges.

Attention

Be very patient with the children as they will often make knots with the woollen thread. Help them when they make mistakes.

Activity

Give each child a card a blunt needle and thread. Show how to lace the thread in and out or 'in and around the outside' of the card. When complete, help to tie the ends. Display the finished shapes as mobiles.

Variation I

After the children have mastered lacing the wool, give them two cards of the same shape with holes punched through both the cards. Make them join the shapes together by lacing with the woollen thread. Let them leave a small opening and stuff with small pieces of paper between the two shapes so as to get a three dimensional object. After stuffing with paper, they can lace to the end and you could help them finish.

Variation II

Give each child a small piece of chart paper with simple drawing on it. Give needle and woollen thread and make the children do a simple running stitch along the outline of the shapes.



Activity No. 11

Objective

To develop sense of design and colour

To develop eye hand co-ordination

Group size

Medium

Materials

Wax crayons (white or any light colour) or wax candles, paper, pencils, water colour or poster colours, and brush. Coloured powder could be used.

Preparation

Mix the paints or coloured powder into a very thin consistency.

Activity

Draw or ask children to draw any picture or design with a wax crayon or candle on the paper. Then ask the children to paint over the whole paper with a bright wet paint. The wax crayon or the candle will resist the paint and the drawing will be visible.



Activity No. 12

Objective

To develop good sense of design and colour

To develop creativity

To express ideas / feelings

Group size

Medium

Materials

Coloured chalk, strong solution of sugar or buttermilk or liquid starch. Large paper or newspaper

Preparation

Soak the coloured chalk in a strong solution of sugar or buttermilk or liquid starch for ten minutes. The soaked chalk will not break easily and give bright colours on the paper.

Activity

Seat children around a table or on the floor. Give each child a paper and some wet chalk. Let children draw and express what- ever they like. Discuss with children and label the drawings with their names and a description of what they have drawn. Display in the class.

Variation I

Suggestions of what the children can draw can be given, like those related to the theme, or to a story told in the class.

Variation II

You could make this a group activity where four or five children can make one large picture on a large paper such as a newspaper sheet.



Activity No. 13

Objective

To develop taste for good design and colour

To create pictures with waste materials

To work together

Group size

Medium

Materials

A collection of materials like small scraps of cloth of different textures, paper, bottle caps, buttons, sand, pebbles, strings, grains matchsticks, beads, feathers, eggshells, wool, seeds, straw etc.

Maida paste and large sheets of old newspaper or brown paper pencil, chalk.

Preparation

Nil

Attention

Make use only of materials that can stick well on the paper.

Keep a collage container in the classroom. Encourage children to bring small things to put in it. Go on adding to it every day.

Activity

Give children a large sheet of paper, paste and the collection of materials. First discuss with them the picture they want to make. Then help them stick the various objects on to the paper to get the result they want. Let them draw the outlines first with chalk or pencil.

Variation I

To do a collage, you could specify a theme or you could draw a picture. Ask children to stick materials within the drawing e.g. you draw a tree and ask the children to stick the leaves for the tree.

Variation II

The collage could be made with only one medium at a time, like

- Sand, which can be coloured with colour powder
- Paper, like magazine paper which is torn into small pieces and used in the collage
- Only geometrical designs like squares rectangles and circles can be used. Drawings can be added for details.



Activity No. 14

Objective

To become familiar with body parts and body shape.

To colour with crayons

Group size

Medium group.

Materials

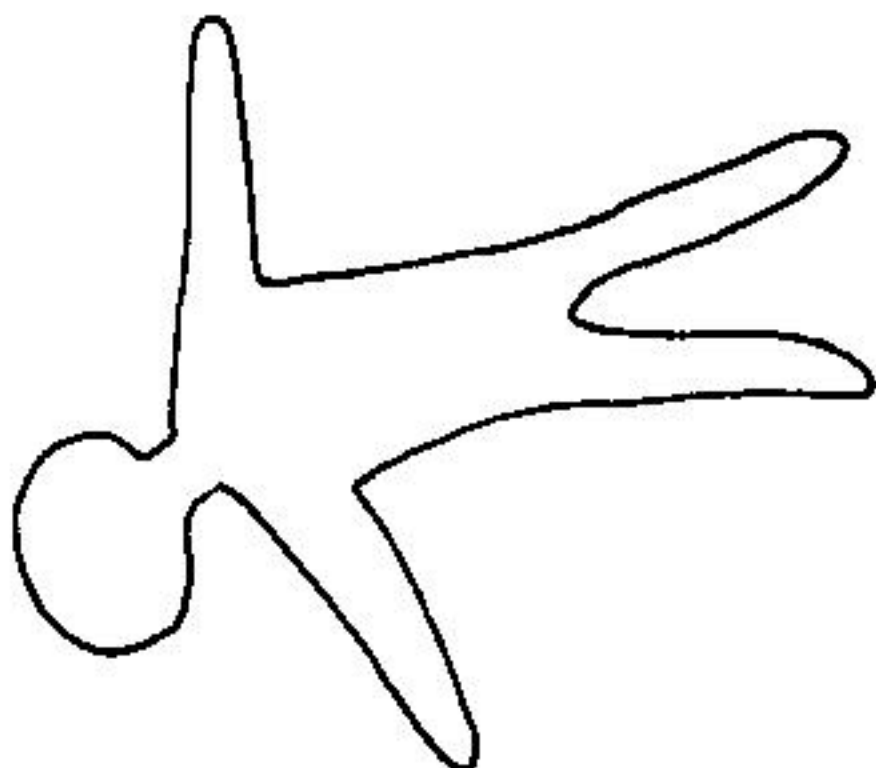
Newspaper, crayons / paints, sketch pens, scissors

Preparation

Paste several sheets of newspaper together so that it is big enough for a child to lie flat with hands extended out. Place the paper on the floor.

Attention

This activity could be carried on for a few days until all the children's drawings are completed.



Activity

Make children place their hands or legs on the newspaper and draw the outline. The children can paint or colour their hands / legs. This could be cut out and pasted in the form of a group collage.

Variation I

Make one child lie flat on the paper with hands stretched out to the sides. Draw her/his outline with a sketch pen. Let the children colour the outline of the child. Help to draw the features. Write the name of the child on the sheet. Cut out and fix on display board. Repeat with the other children. While colouring, talk with the children about the parts of the body.

Variation II

Teach action songs about body parts like, "Head and shoulder, knees and toes (3)

Eyes, ears, mouth and nose".

Variation III

Do actions and body movements to music and make children imitate you.



Activity No. 15

Objective

To create beautiful and colourful paintings

To share and appreciate designs

To develop eye hand co-ordination

Group size

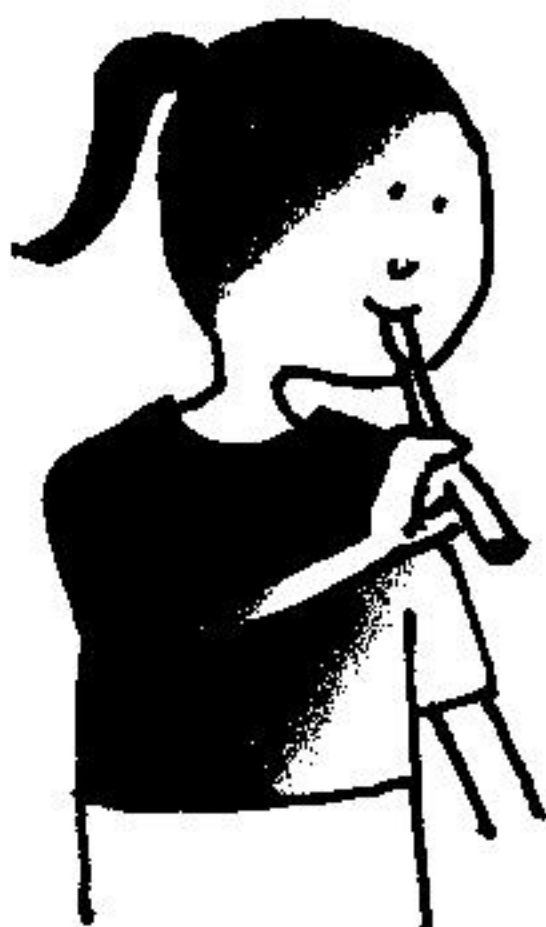
Medium

Materials

Paints/colour powder, paint brushes, twine, drinking straws, sponge, paper

Preparation

Nil.



Activity

Take a sheet of paper and arrange the thread soaked in paint on one side of the paper with one end of the thread at the edge of the paper. Fold the paper in half. Press the paper with one hand and gently pull the thread out with the other. Open the folded paper carefully to get a mirror image design.

Variation I

Paint a leaf with a thin coat of paint and press the leaf on a paper.

Variation II

Dab a few drops of paint on one side of the paper. Fold paper over the paint, press gently and rub to spread the paint. Then open the paper and see lovely designs that resemble insects, flowers, and butterflies.

Variation III

Give each child a paper and a straw. Put a little paint on the paper with a brush. Ask the children to place the end of their straw on the paint and blow in one direction to spread the paint.



Activity No. 16

Objective

- To create good design
- To illustrate feelings and thoughts
- To develop eye-hand coordination

Group size

Medium

Materials

Small wooden blocks (about six) thick thread, poster paint or coloured powder, paste, paper

Preparation

Apply paste on the length of the thread and wrap around the block to form any abstract design. Leave to dry. Mix paints or coloured powder into medium consistency and place in plates

Attention

After dipping the block in the paint, the excess paint on the block can be removed by covering the block with a scrap of paper or a small piece of thin cloth.

Activity

Give each child a paper and a block and a plate of paint. Demonstrate the activity by dipping the block in the paint or by applying the paint with a brush and pressing the block on the paper. Let children print any design that they like. Several prints can be made with one dip in the paint. The sides of the block can make many designs. Let it dry and then display in the classroom.

Variation I

Roll thread on a pencil or a roller. Apply paint on the thread and ask children to roll the pencil on the paper. Rolling in different directions can give interesting designs.

Variation II

You can use vegetables like potato by cutting potatoes in halves. Carve a simple design on the flat side of the half. Sliced lady's fingers or leaves can also be used.



Activity No. 17

Objective

To develop eye-hand coordination

To develop and co-ordinate finger muscles

To create beautiful things

Group size

Medium

Materials

Plenty of square pieces of coloured paper (12x12 cms.)

Preparation

To get bright coloured paper you can dye newspaper with rangoli powder. Mix the colour powder in water and a little paste and dip newspaper in it. Hang out to dry.

Activity

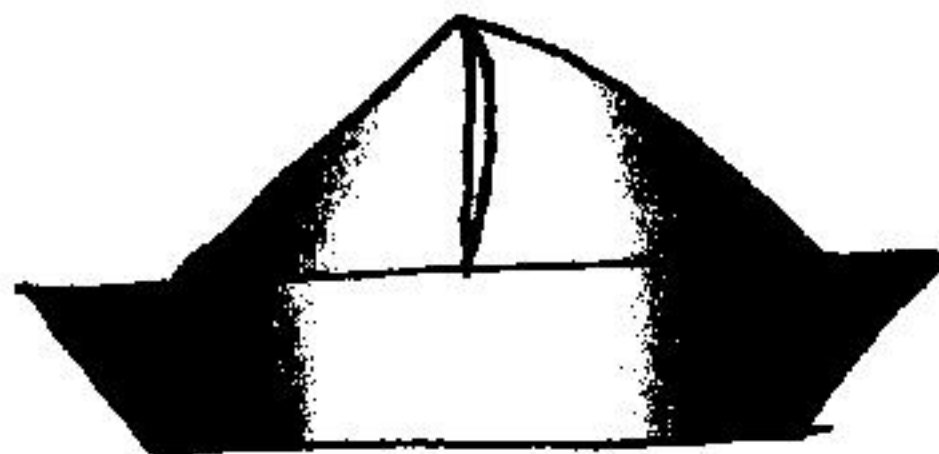
Make children sit in a semicircle.

Distribute paper to all the children.

Demonstrate a paper folding activity giving very clear instructions. Let the children do it step by step. Help children who find it difficult to follow steps. Start with simple items like a boat, a fan, a hat, and a rabbit (See Appendix).

Variation

The paper folded objects can be used to make a picture. Make children colour a background of a scene and stick the objects on the paper, e.g. water or sea with paper boats and fish and some birds flying.





PAPER FLOWERS

Activity No. 18

Objective

To develop dexterity of fingers

To develop a taste for colour and design

Group size

Medium

Materials

Coloured tissue paper (kite paper), paste, chart paper

Preparation

Cut tissue paper into plenty of small squares 6x6 cms.

Draw stems and flowers on the chart paper.

Activity

Give each child a piece of chart paper with the drawing, some tissue paper and paste. Guide children to crumple tissue paper by squeezing and rolling on the table or between the hands in a circular motion. Make children apply paste on the ball and paste it on the stems and flowers drawn on the chart paper.

Variation

Collect small twigs during a nature walk. Ask children to paste the coloured paper flowers on these twigs. Let them plant these twigs in disposable cups filled with sand. Each child can have his/her own flowerpot.





Activity No. 19

Objective

To use imagination

To be creative and express feelings

To use body and gesture for expression

Group size

Large

Materials

Common objects like stick, pot, box, cloth, hat etc.

Preparation

Nil.

Activity

Seat the children in a circle. Put an ordinary object in the centre. Each child gets a turn at using the object to "become" someone, or do something. e.g. If the stick is placed in the middle, children can imitate an old man, or pretend to hit a fruit on a tree etc. Go round the circle and let everyone have a turn. After they have used one object you could change the object. Encourage children to play the game silently.

Variation I

Once the children have learnt the game, tell them not to repeat any action which has been done by any other child. You can change the object when they run out of ideas.

Variation II

Let every child say something about the person he / she has become, and also do appropriate actions.



Activity No. 19

Objective

To use imagination

To be creative and express feelings

To use body and gesture for expression

Group size

Large

Materials

Common objects like stick, pot, box, cloth, hat etc.

Preparation

Nil.

Activity

Seat the children in a circle. Put an ordinary object in the centre. Each child gets a turn at using the object to "become" someone, or do something. e.g. If the stick is placed in the middle, children can imitate an old man, or pretend to hit a fruit on a tree etc. Go round the circle and let everyone have a turn. After they have used one object you could change the object. Encourage children to play the game silently.

Variation I

Once the children have learnt the game, tell them not to repeat any action which has been done by any other child. You can change the object when they run out of ideas.

Variation II

Let every child say something about the person he / she has become, and also do appropriate actions.

**Activity No. 20****Objective**

To help children express their desires, likes and dislikes freely

To release pent up emotions

Group size

Large

Materials

Nil

Preparation

Nil

Attention

Remember that this game is not to evaluate the children's responses but merely to help them express themselves.

Activity

Seat the children in a circle along with you. Start a discussion about yourself and something that happened to you on the way to school. This could be an imaginary story as this is only to motivate the children to talk. Encourage the children to talk and start a story which has some fantasy in it like, "If all the animal toys in the school came alive what would you do with them?" Give the children time to think and let them express themselves freely. Let children take turns to talk, give their own ideas, to express their desires, likes and dislikes freely.

Chapter VIII

Academic readiness, or school readiness, as it is often called, is the state when young children are ready to begin learning the three formal skills of reading, writing and arithmetic. Every child may arrive at this stage at a different age, and at his/her own pace.

Signs of readiness for learning can be seen in children's behaviour, and an obvious interest in an activity, e.g. when a child shows interest in books, she is ready to read. Disinterest in a learning activity may be sign of lack of readiness. Insisting on the activity when children are not interested, whatever the reason be, is likely to produce little or no learning, and may cause frustrations and bad feelings. This may also turn the children against that particular task. Sustained attention also depends upon the degree of interest and curiosity shown by the children, and this can be aroused through play, which is the young child's way of learning.

The principle of readiness does not necessarily mean that you must simply wait for the child to give signs of readiness to learn. Readiness itself can be taught, through many structured and unstructured activities.

The key to foster children's readiness to learn is to provide many opportunities and large variety of concrete objects for spontaneous exploration, in a secure trusting climate, extending gradually into more structured learning activities

Let us now look at the three aspects of readiness – pre-reading, pre-writing and pre-numeracy.

Pre-reading

How do we start teaching children to read?

Do we begin with sounds, words or sentences?

Many people believe that reading involves knowing the letters of the alphabet, how to put them together to read words, and how to string words together to read sentences. But sometimes these skills can be developed and yet the child cannot read. For reading is essentially the process of getting meaning from the printed word. A child may recognize all the words but may not understand what she reads. So the real aim of pre-reading is to show that meaning can be derived from what is read, and to enjoy the process.

Children have to be prepared to read with understanding. To a three-year-old for instance, the word "cat" may mean a fuzzy



purring creature or a frightening beast. Suddenly he has to learn that some marks on the paper which look like this, "cat", also means a cat. Letters and words are symbols and not concrete things. Before being confronted with the letters of alphabet, children must be able to deal with abstract symbols.

Activities like sorting, matching, classifying, understanding relationships, perceiving patterns and problem solving described in earlier chapters help the child to achieve the mental maturity needed to relate symbols to sounds and meaning.

Children also need to have fine visual and auditory discrimination, and be able to recognise minute differences in shapes size, and in sounds. While these skills too need some maturity, they can be developed by practice.

Another important factor in learning to read with meaning is mastery over the spoken language. Children who have a good vocabulary, and express themselves freely and clearly, are likely to be better readers. Again, children who are familiar with books, and to whom stories have been read from books are more curious about the printed word and more likely to understand that printed words hold meaning and can be a source of fun.

Therefore, the most significant ways to promote reading are:

- Provide a rich background of stimulating experiences and activities
- Develop children's speech and vocabulary
- Create the desire to read in children
- Give practice in visual, aural, and oral discrimination

Pre-writing

Readiness for writing can be seen in the child's ability to hold a pencil correctly with the fingers and manipulate it to make the fine movements needed to write. This too is related to maturity, but can be developed by pre-writing tasks, or readiness activities for writing. Here are some exercises that provide practice in pre-writing skills: (Box: 7).



**Box : 7**

Colouring pictures with large crayons

Colouring or tracing or drawing within lines

Cutting paper with a pair of scissors

Threading beads on a needle or string

Stacking small wooden blocks one on top of the other

Fitting constructional toys together

Finger tracing in the air, then on a sand tray, or slate

Throwing and catching a balloon, a ball, a beanbag or a rubber ring

Air tracing with the whole arm, then the wrist and the pointed index finger while the elbow is firmly placed on the table.

Scribbling from left to right

Pre-numeracy

Readiness for arithmetic is shown in the level of understanding of concepts related to quantity, volume, space, time etc and in logical thinking in children, which is derived from their mathematical discoveries. At the age of two or three, children know that one block on top of another makes two. They know that if they add one more, they will have three, even though they may not know the words two or three. When children lift up objects, they experience lightness or heaviness. When a child cuddles up in mother's lap, he/she can feel how small he/she is in relation to his/her mother's size. With each of these experiences, children encounter and discover mathematical concepts.

Work and play in different areas extend and support children's understanding and provide opportunities to clear up confusions about mathematical concepts.

- Block building introduces size relationships, number, quantity, and three dimensionality
- Dancing allows children to explore and understand space through their bodies.





- Collage and construction activities provide experiences in sorting and classifying.
- Clean up time provides opportunities for comparing, sorting, counting, and arranging.
- Distributing plates, cups, flowers, crayons or pencils to other children teacher one-to-one correspondence, or counting.

These and other concrete experiences are critical in helping children acquire mathematical concepts and vocabulary.

Ordering, sorting, classifying, sequencing, seriating and experiencing one to one correspondence help lay the foundation for mathematical concepts.

To the Teacher

In all the earlier chapters, you would have come across a number of readiness activities which foster academic learning. Look back and see how many activities you can find which are helpful as pre-reading, pre-writing or pre-numeracy skills. You can build on them and make them suited to the needs of children at different stages of development. Here are a few more, which introduce children to reading, writing and arithmetic.





Activity No. 1

Objective

To learn to count

To learn to add

Group size

Medium

Material

Thick card.

Silver paper.

Dice 2

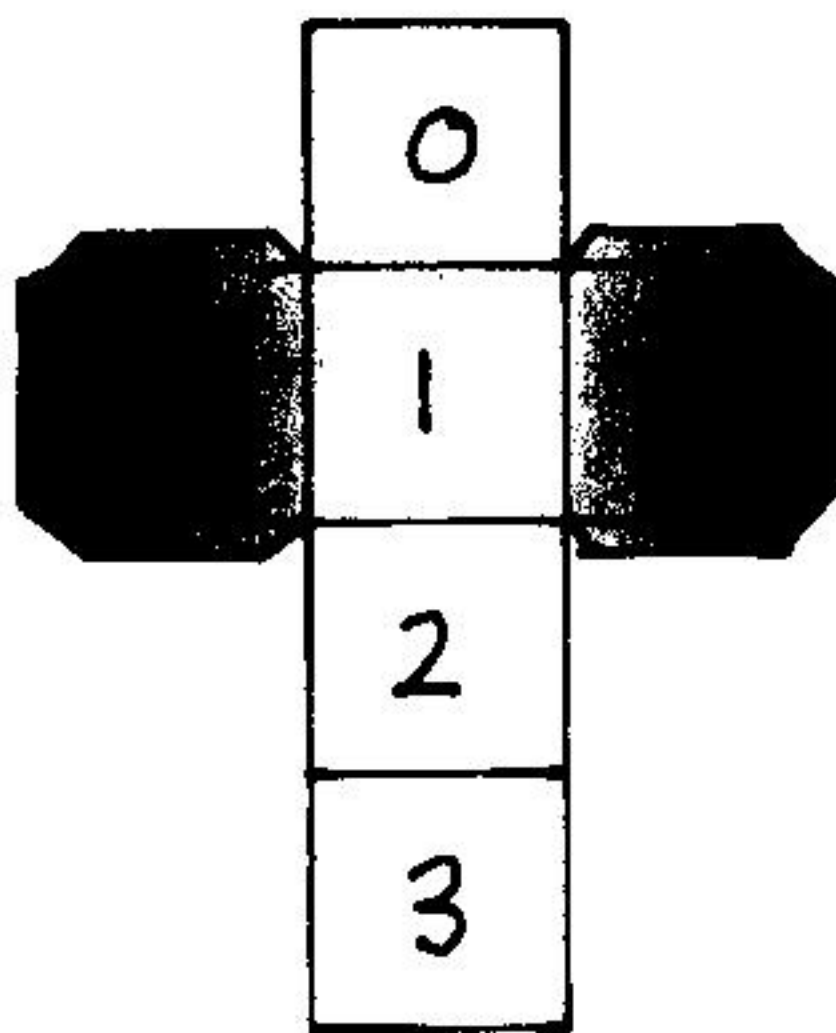
Preparation

To make coins, cut the card into small circles of the size of a rupee coin, and cover with silver paper.

To make dice, see Appendix.

Activity

One child is made the banker who keeps all the coins in a box. Children take turn in throwing the dice. They collect from the 'banker' as many coins as the number shown in the dice. After four, five rounds each child adds up his/her coins. The child who has the highest number of coins gets a turn to become the next banker.





Activity No. 2

Objective

To learn number names

To count

Group size

Large

Material

Chart paper, sketch pens, safety pins.

Old greeting cards.

Preparation

To make number badges, cut out cards 6 cms. x 3 cms, one card per child. Number the badges with numbers from one to ten.

Activity

Pin a number badge each on to the children, and make them stand in a circle. You stand in the centre and clap. If you clap three times the child with the number three badge must sit down.

Continue the game till all the children sit down.

Variation I

Call out a number and the children with that number badge should clap that many times. e.g. you call out 6 and the children with number 6 badges clap 6 times.

Variation II

Instead of number badges, collect old greeting cards and paste a number inside each card. Give each child a card and play the game of clapping numbers. Children have to open their cards to find their number and this adds to the mystery and fun.

COUNTING RACE



Activity No. 3

Objective

To learn to count.

To play the game as a team.

Group size

Large

Materials

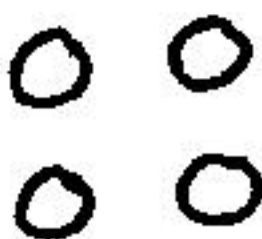
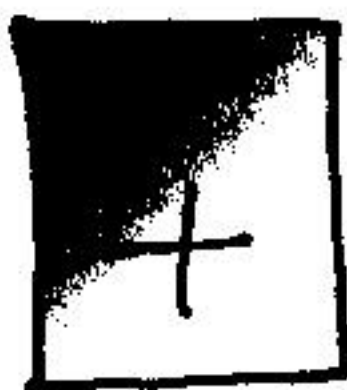
Small objects such as counters, beads, seeds, stones, small blocks, number cards.

Preparation

Nil.

Attention

To avoid pushing and pulling by the children, the counters could be put in three or four piles in three or four places in the room.



Activity

Divide the children into two or three teams. Place a pile of counters in different corners of the room. Call out a number. One child from each team must run to the pile of counters and pick the stated number of counters and run to you. e.g. if three is called out the child has to pick only three counters. Continue till all the team members have had a chance.

Variation I

Ask children to stand in a line. Give a number card to each child and ask each child to bring the number of counters that is on the card. Let them place it on the ground for the other children to check.

Variation II

The first variation could also be played as a race. All the children run together to pick the number of counters you have asked. The children must bring the correct number of counters and place it on the floor for you to check.



Activity No. 4

Objective

To learn to count and add.

To follow instructions.

Group size

Large

Material

Two dice cubes

Preparation

To make dice see Appendix.

Activity

Let the children stand or sit in a circle. You stand in the center and throw the two dice. The children add the numbers. Then let any one child do an action as many times as the number shown on the two dice. e.g. jump, skip, hop, clap, count, wave hands. If the dice show 3 and 5, the child must do the action eight times.

Variation I

Divide the children into small groups of 5 or 6 and give each group a dice. All the groups stand at one end of the room. The leader of each team throws the dice. His/her team has to take as many steps as seen on the dice. They continue with the game till one of the teams wins.

Variation II

Let children stand in a line at one end of the room. A child throws the dice. All the children must take that many steps forward. Continue till all are across the room.

Variation III

To play in pairs, each pair will need a dice. One child throws the dice while the other takes the steps.



Activity No. 5

Objective

To learn ordinal positions

To follow rules and directions

Group size

Large

Materials

Number cards one to ten

Preparation

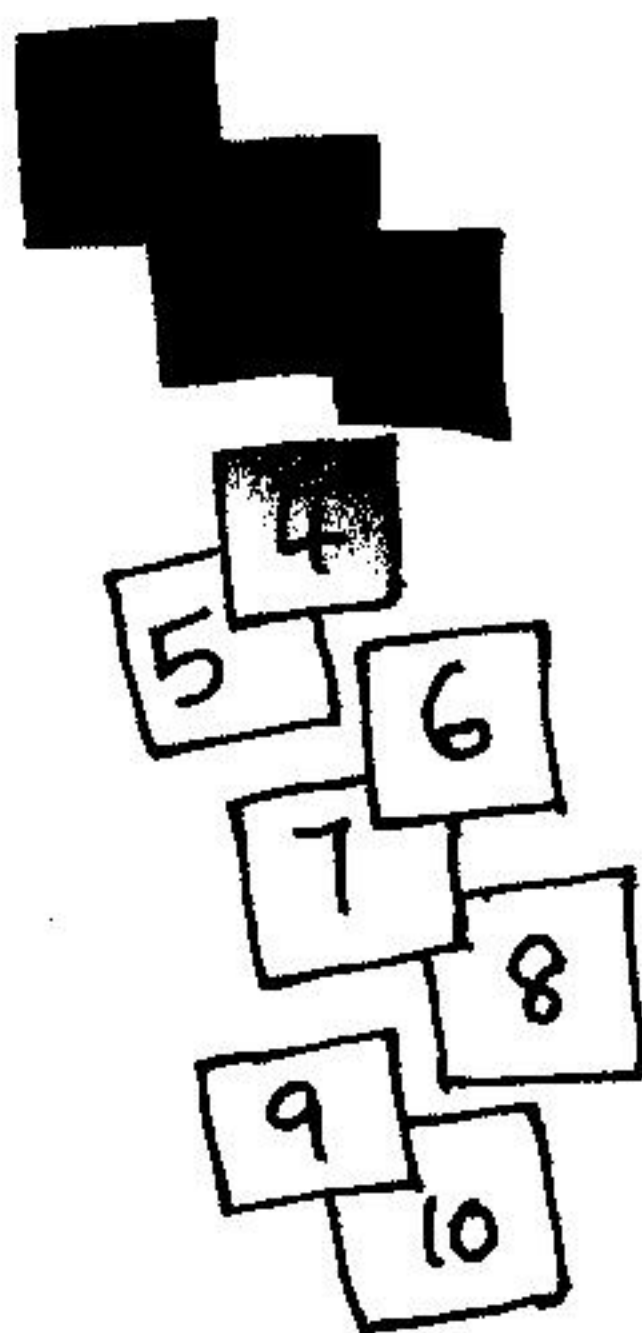
Nil.

Activity

Group all the children at one end of the room. Call out ten children at a time. Give these ten children the number cards 1 to 10. Let them move around freely. When you clap your hands or blow a whistle the children should form a line in a sequential order like the child with number one card stands first then the child with number two behind the first child and so on. The children show up their numbers and the rest of the children must check to see if they are standing in the correct order. Now make these children sit down and give a chance to another group of ten children.

Variation

This game could be played as a team game. Form teams of ten. Give each team ten number cards, let the children run around freely and when you blow the whistle each team must reassemble in a line from one to ten. Let each team check the other teams to see if the children are standing in the correct ordinal positions.





Activity No. 6

Objective

To count

To learn number names

To match names and numerals

Group size

Large

Material

Dice

Chalk.

Preparation

Draw a racetrack and mark large square divisions on the floor or the play ground.

Attention

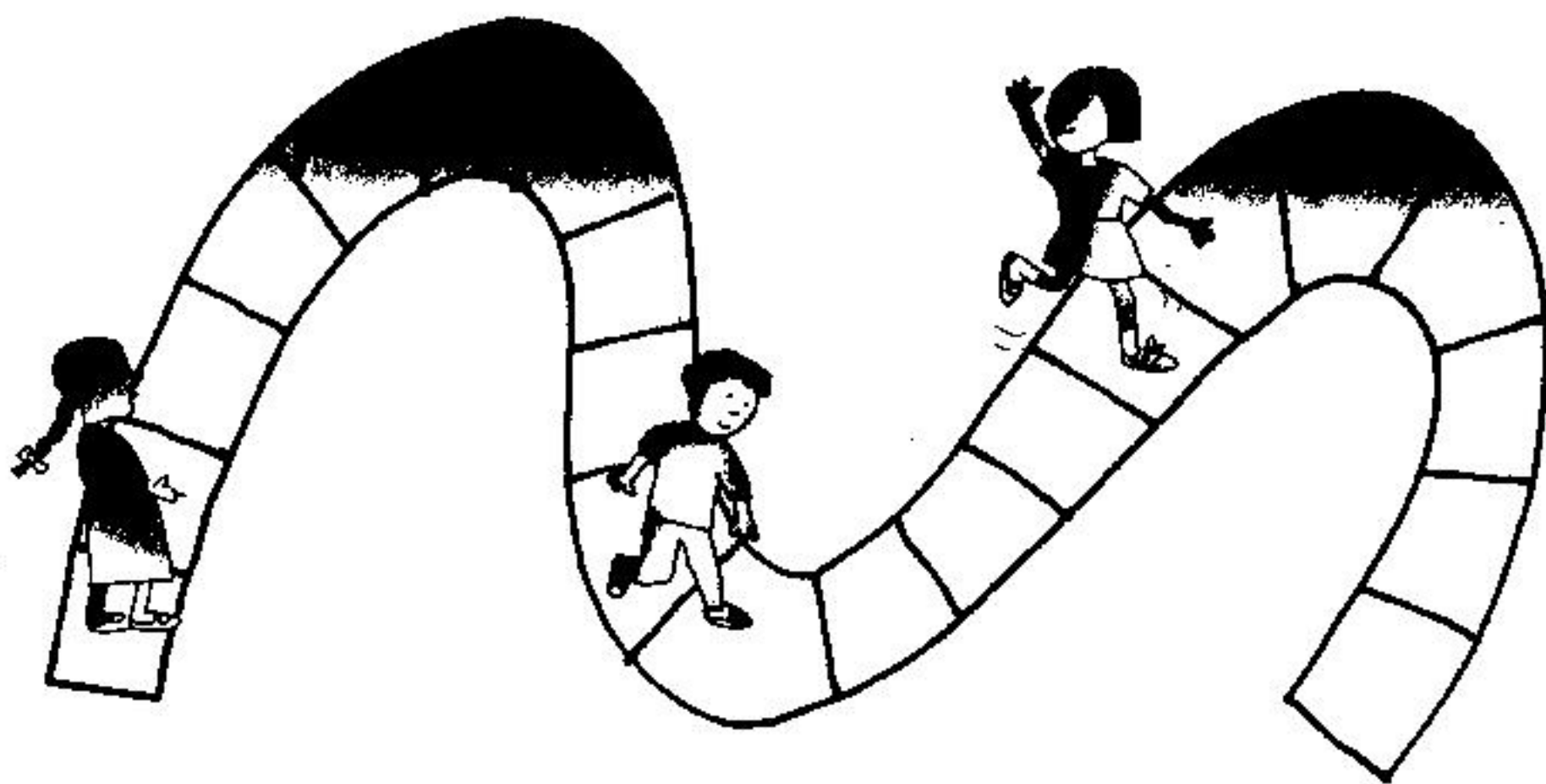
As all children must get turns it is advisable not to have more than 20 squares.

Activity

Make all the children sit near the diagram drawn on the floor. Let three children play at a time, while the others watch. Each child throws the dice in turn and goes forward as many places as the dice shows. When all the three children have made the first move, repeat the round again. The child who reaches the end square first is the winner. Continue the game till all the three children finish the track. Then the next three children take their turn.

Variation

This game can also be played on a Judo board with counters and dice.





Activity No. 7

Objective

To learn to do simple addition and subtraction sums.

To be alert and quick

Group size

Large

Material

Number cards 1-9. Cards with simple addition and subtraction sums on them.

Preparation

Nil

Attention

Children should have sufficient practice with the mathematical skills. Give enough time for the children to work out the sums.

Activity

Divide the class into two groups. Each one has a partner in the other group. Give all the children a number card face down. Make two groups stand at opposite ends of the room. When you clap your hands, the partners will run to each other, and together they will add the two numbers on their cards e.g. child A has number 2 and the partner number 3 so $2+3=5$. They then run back to you with the answer. When all the children have completed let the children check each other's answers. This can also be played with domino cards.

Variation

This game can also be played as a team game. Divide the children into two or three teams, and make them stand in rows. When you blow the whistle, the first child in each team will run to you at the other end of the room. Give each one a simple addition or subtraction sum to solve. As soon as it has been solved correctly, the child runs back to the team. Then the next child in the line has to run forward to solve a sum. In this manner let all the children in each of the teams get turns at solving the sums.



Activity No. 8

Objective

To understand the concept of time

To recognise the use of numbers in a calendar

Group size

Large

Material

Chart paper, sketch pens

Preparation

Prepare a chart for each month of a calendar or if possible get a calendar which has large numbers.

Activity

Display the calendar in the class for all the children to see clearly. Help children read the day and the date. Mark all important events and days of the month as they come. You could mark birthdays, festivals, school events etc. Discuss with the children the important days and count to see the number of days left to the event. Mark off each day when the day is over.

Variation I

Discuss the associations of each day, e.g. Saturdays and Sundays are holidays.

Variation II

The calendar could be used to register the seasons e.g. on a sunny day, a picture or a symbol of the sun could be drawn on the date, and on a rainy day, rain drops could be drawn in that space.



Activity No. 9

Objective

To understand the concept of measuring

To determine measurements by number of steps

Group size

Large

Material

Measuring tape, pencil and paper

Preparation

Nil.

Activity

Make children walk across the playground and count the number of steps it takes to walk from one end to the other end of the field. Do the same across the courtyard, verandah and room. Discuss with the children, asking questions like, which side is longer? Which side is shorter? How do you know?

Variation

For older children you could use a measuring tape and measure in meters. Make them calculate the distances e.g. The distance around the play field. The distance to the class room from the library, play ground etc.





Activity No. 10

Objective

To understand the relationship between various shapes and sizes.

To learn the name of shapes

To recognise similarities and differences

Group size

Small

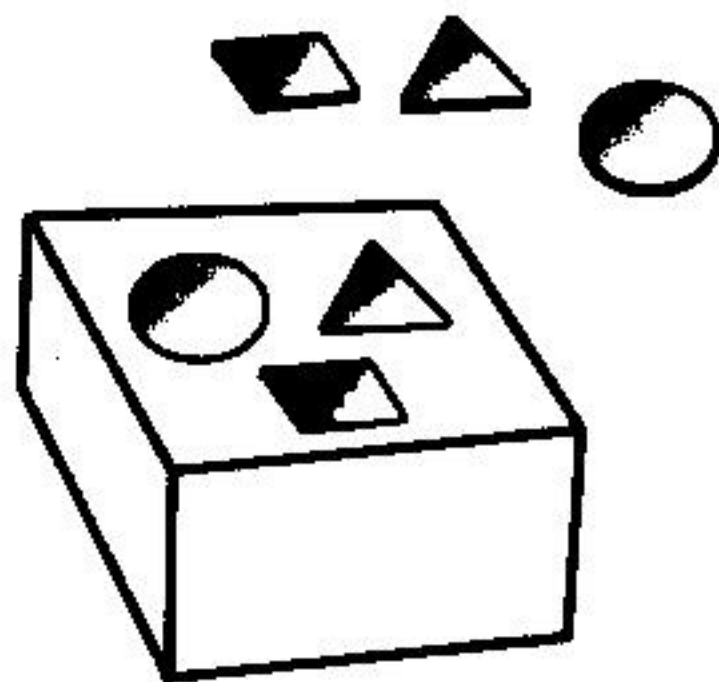
Material

Shoe box and thick card board

Preparation

Take a shoebox and cut out the shapes of a circle, square and triangle on the cover.

Make many small cut outs of squares, triangles and rectangles using the cardboard.



Activity

Seat children on the ground and distribute the shape cut outs to them. Give them the shoebox 'posting box' and let children post the shapes into the correct cut outs into the box. Let children take turns and check each other's posting. After the shapes are over they could be taken out of the box and the game can start again.

Variation I

Let children look around the room for objects with different shapes. Let them trace around these shapes and cut them out e.g. a square block or a circle-plate. Display on the bulletin board with labels and a caption "shapes all around the room"

Variation II

Make children bring objects from home of different shapes. Each child must "show and tell" about his shape and then place in a box which could be used for sorting by colour, shape, size or use.



Activity No. 11

Objective

To recognise the names of the letters

To associate the letter with the sound

To learn the words and their initial sounds

Group size

Large

Material

Card board boxes (shoeboxes), chart paper, pictures, sketch pens.

Preparation

Make 6 post boxes with the shoeboxes. On each box write 4 to 5 letters. Collect pictures or draw pictures. Mount on chart paper cut into post card size. Write the name of the picture clearly. Make at least one card for each child in the class and words for all the letters of the alphabet.

Attention

Choose only words with their initial letter making the same sound as the letter to be used in the game. This game can be played in any language.

Activity

Distribute the cards to the children. Let each child first stand up show her card and identify the picture, read the word and also make the sound of the initial letter. Now let them post their cards into the box with the same letter.

Variation I

This game can be played as a team game. Divide the class into small groups. Place all the picture cards on the table. Let one child from each team come to the table, pick up a card and take it to her group. The groups together read the card and decide into which box the card should be posted. Then the child posts the card. In this manner let all the children get turns to pick and post the cards.

Variation II

Choose a low table, or shelf. Select a letter and together with the children collect objects whose name start with that letter. This activity can be spread over a week. Label all the objects. For the next week, clear the table and start with another letter.



Activity No. 12

Objective

To observe differences and similarities in shapes of numbers and letters

To prepare to read and write

Group size

Large

Materials

Blackboard, chalk, paper and pencils

Preparation

Draw 6 small squares on the blackboard. Draw the same shape in five squares and in the 6th square draw a different shape. Do the same for the activity on letters or numbers. Write the same letter in five squares and in one write the same letter either upside down or in reverse. Also prepare worksheets of the same activity for each child.

Activity

Call one child at a time to come to the black board and find the shape which is drawn wrong. When the child spots the mistake, she can draw a circle around the different one and also draw the correct form on the black board. Let the other children say whether it is right or wrong. Now draw another shape and call the next child to come. Give turns to all the children. The same activity could be done with numbers or letters.

Variation I

Give individual worksheets to all the children, and crayons/pencils. Ask children to circle the wrong ones and correct them.

Variation II

Give each child a piece of print, either a newspaper or a book. Write a letter on the board. Ask the children to look for the letter in their paper and put up their hands as soon as they find one. Give time for all the children to find the letter. Make the children write the letter in their notebooks.





Activity No. 13

Objective

To recognise written form of names

To learn to help each other

To recognise letters

Group size

Medium

Material

Chart paper and sketch pens

Preparation

Write the names of all the children on chart paper, fairly large, so as to be seen from far. Then cut out into individual names. Hide them around the room. Have another set ready with individual letters of the names cut out.

Attention

Children should be able to read and write their names.

Activity

Give instructions to the children to look around the room to find their name cards hidden in different parts of the room. Let children take turns and do this one by one, while the other children help the child find his/her name. Let all the children find their names. These could be pasted on a chart and displayed in the class.

Variation

Hide the individual letters of the children's names around the room. Let children find the letters and make their own names.



Activity No. 14

Objective

To associate pictures with words

To recognise the letters of the alphabet and their sounds

To stimulate thinking

Group size

Large

Material

Picture cards, word cards and letter cards to match each picture. See Appendix

Preparation

Nil

Attention.

This game can be played in any language.

Activity

Make children sit in a semicircle. Shuffle the picture cards and word cards. Place about six cards on the floor in front of the children. Call out a child to come and pick one picture and match it with its word card and place them together. The rest of the children have to check if it is correct. In this manner give a chance to each child. After six children have completed, the cards could be reshuffled or more cards could be added. Give all the children a chance to match.

Variation

The same game can be played with the words and the beginning letters, eg. one card has 'bat' and the other card 'b'.



Activity No. 15

Objective

To stimulate imagination and creativity

To motivate to read

Group size

Medium

Material

Drawing paper and crayons

Preparation

Nil

Attention

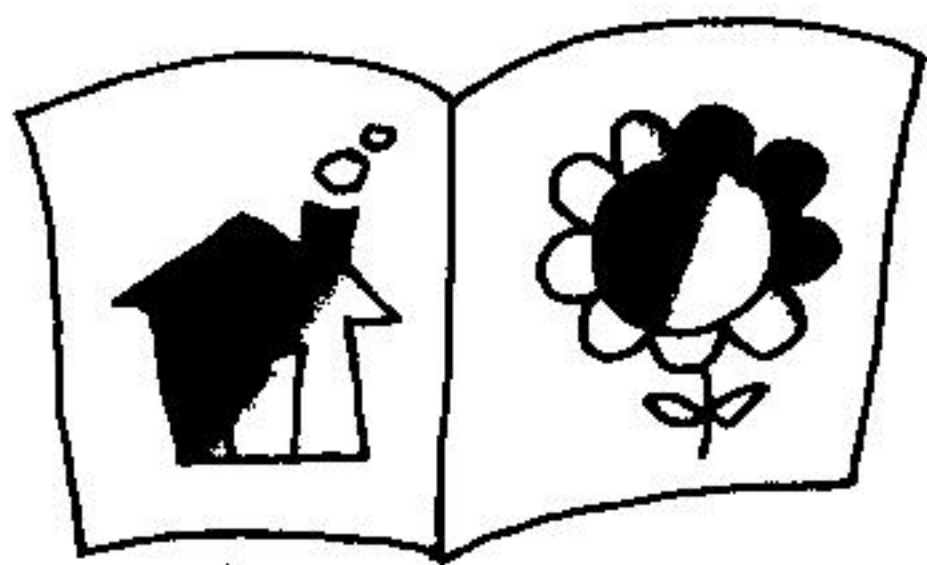
The main aim of this activity is to make children use their imagination and creativity, so the sentences framed by the children should be reproduced without any changes.

Activity

This activity is to prepare a classroom newspaper. Call out children one by one to relate something that happened to them at home or in school. When all the children have had their turn to talk, give each of them paper and crayons. Ask them to draw a picture of what they had spoken about. Then go around to each child and ask her to explain what she has drawn. You can write this out at the base of the drawing in clear handwriting. These drawings can be displayed in the class. After a few days the pictures can be collected and stapled together to make a book which can be kept in the library corner. The next week another set of pictures can be prepared. In this way, a little library of children's 'own' books can be prepared.

Variation

For older children who have learnt to write, let them write their own story which can be displayed in the class.





Activity No. 16

Objective

To read the words with comprehension

Group size

Large

Material

Small cards and sketch pens.

Preparation

Cut out small cards about 5 x 10 cms. On each card write an action word like sing, laugh, sit, stand, jump, eat, cry, drink and bend. Use a stick picture to illustrate each card.

Activity

Seat children in a semi-circle. Show each card to the children and explain the action. Shuffle the cards and place in the centre. Each child takes a turn, comes and picks a card, reads the word and does the action. Help the child who finds it difficult to read. Children will love to pretend that they are reading.

